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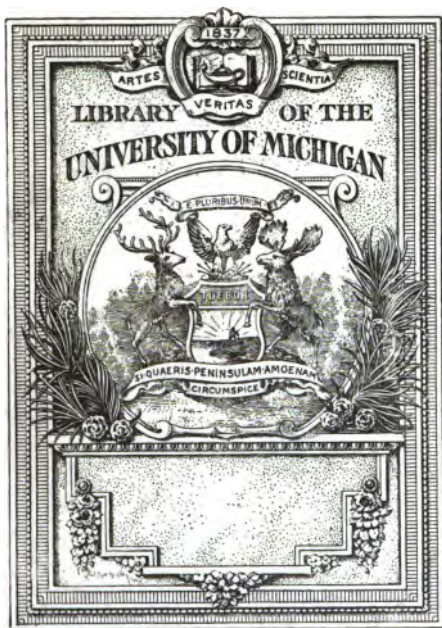
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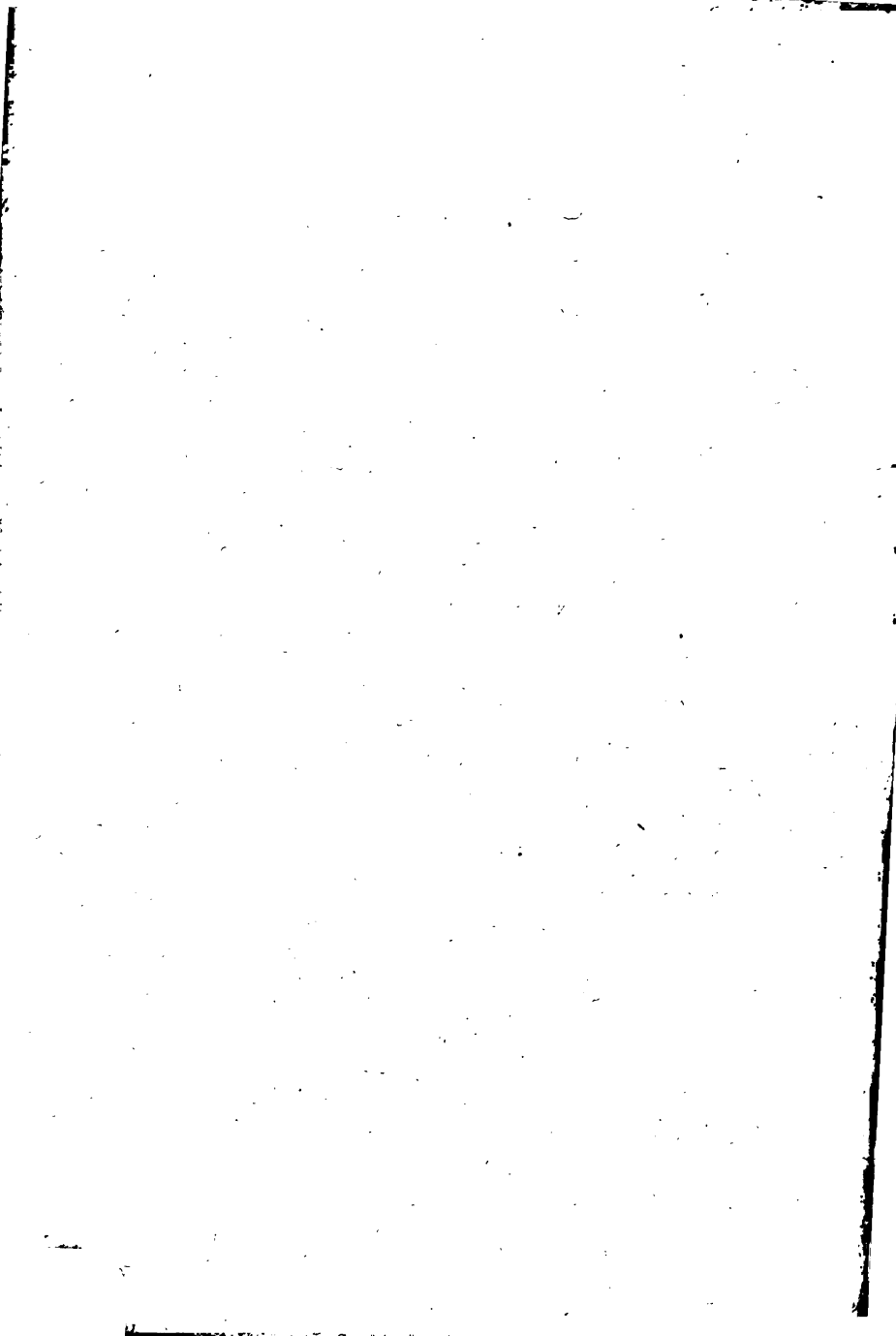


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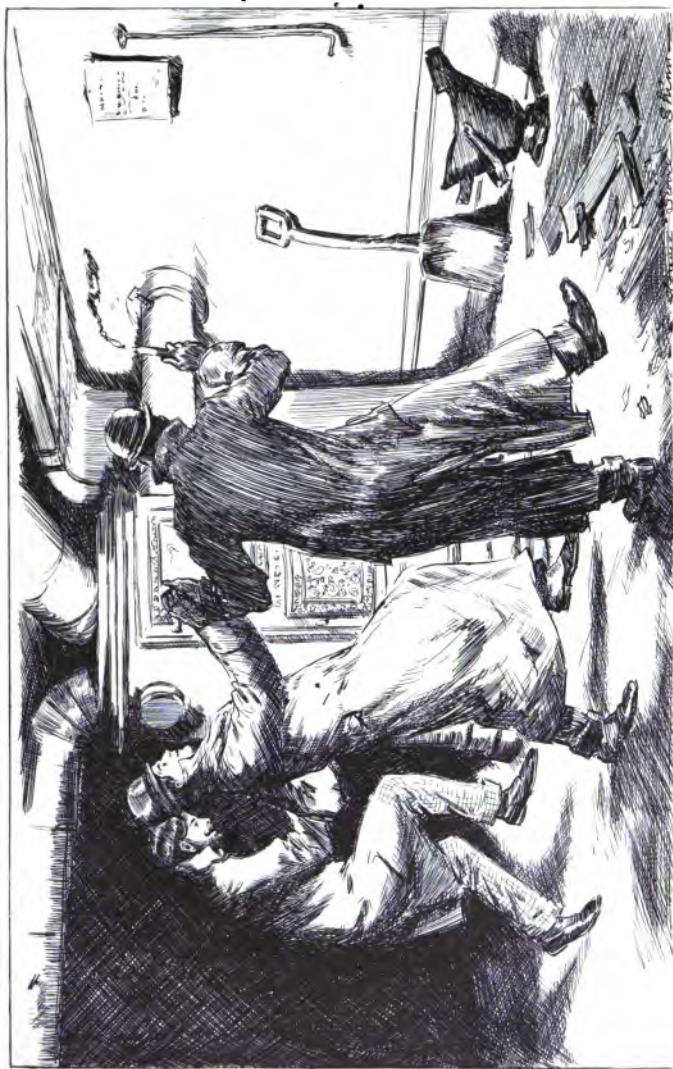






1944

ALAN



"WE JOINED HANDS AND CIRCLED AROUND THE FURNACE."—P. 267.

POE'S "RAVEN"
IN AN ELEVATOR
AND OTHER TALES

Being the Third Edition of

MORE CHEERFUL AMERICANS

BY

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

AUTHOR OF "CHEERFUL AMERICANS," ETC.

*With Illustrations by Florence Scovel Shinn, Fanny Y. Cory,
F. R. Gruger and May Wilson Watkins*



NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1907

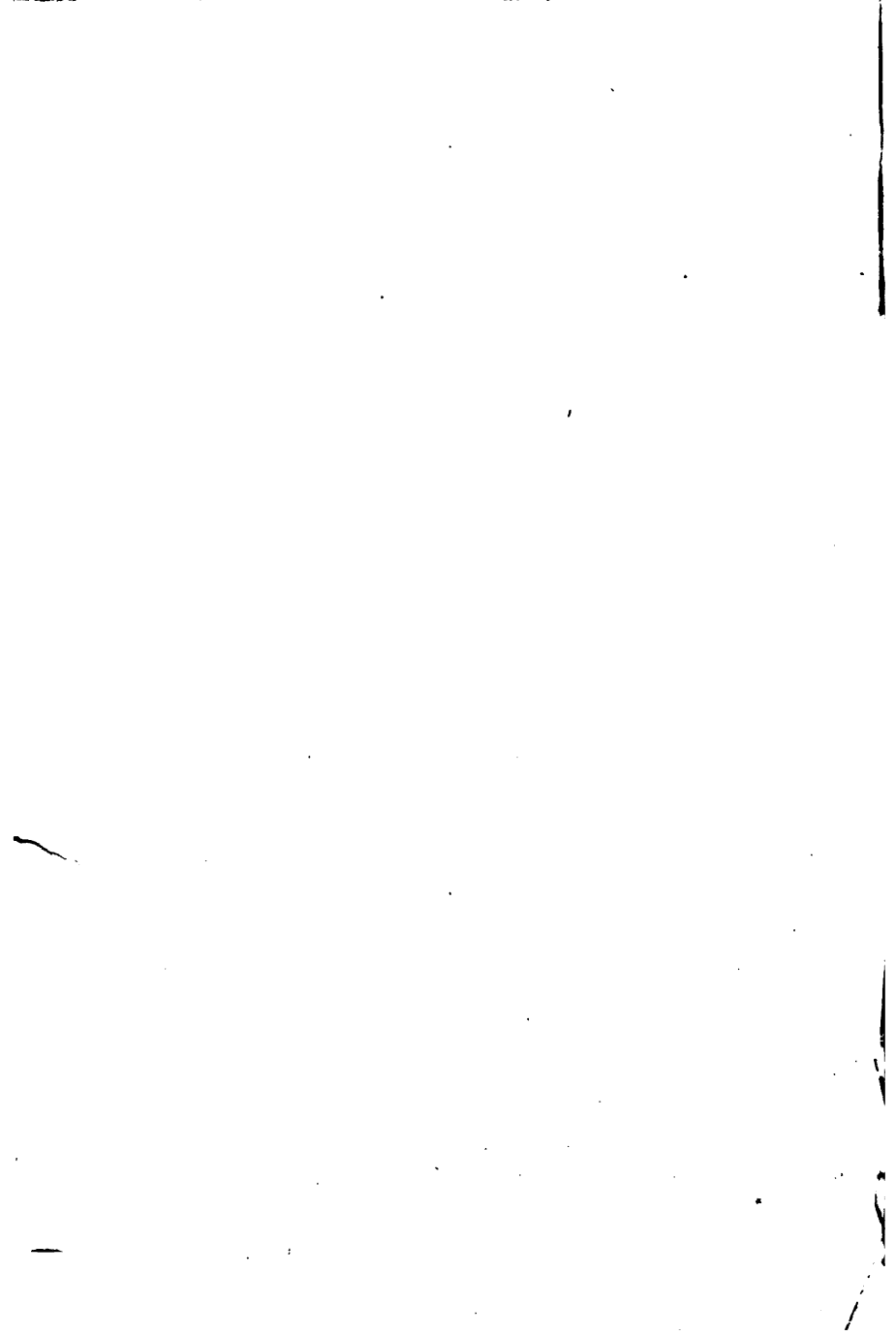
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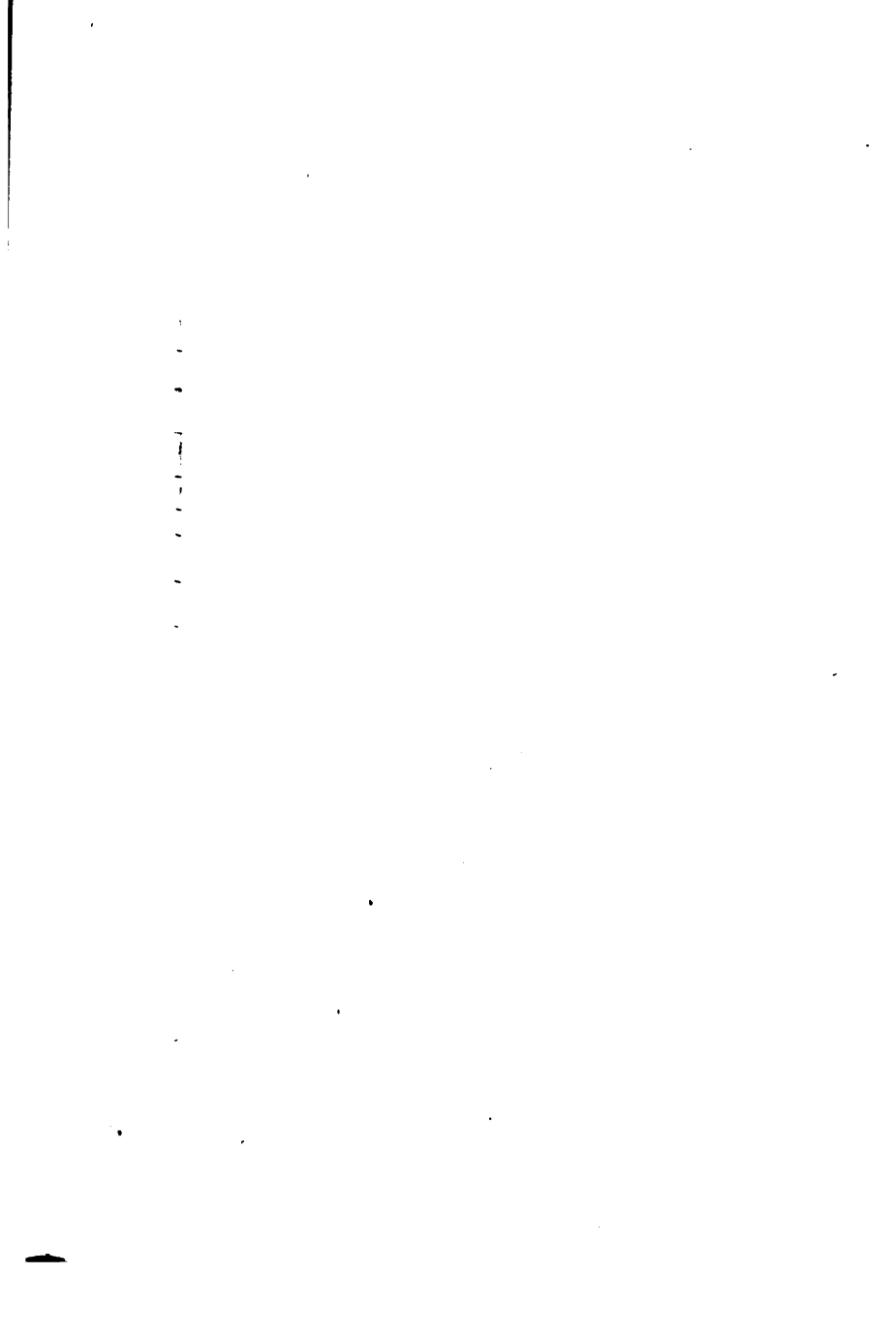
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TO
MARY FULLERTON LOOMIS

175257



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POE'S "RAVEN" IN AN ELEVATOR

THE reading was to be in the apartment of Mrs. Atwater, who had done so much for the Sunshine Day Nursery, and had sold two hundred dollars' worth of tickets.

Mrs. Atwater lives on the fifth floor of "The Waterloo," and one has a choice of ways to her rooms. For those who are fond of Alpine exercise there are five flights of stairs, but for those who prefer to exercise in other ways there is an elevator. If there had been no elevator there would have been no story to tell. You see, the elevator was put in at least twenty years ago, and it is neither so swift nor so accurate as those of

2 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

to-day. Old age affects elevators as it does people, and this one would be content to go up two floors instead of six, and it often gives out when half-way up and flatly refuses to go any farther. Then there is nothing to do but to get out and continue the journey on foot.

It was a little after three-thirty in the afternoon. Most of the audience had assembled, and most of them had walked up, because it was one of the elevator's balky days. Those who lived in "The Waterloo" had often commented on the fact that on days of receptions, when an elevator was most needed, this elevator found difficulty in mounting higher than the second or third floor.

But to-day it was not the elevator that was causing the buzz of excitement in Mrs. Atwater's parlours; it was the fact that the reader who was to entertain the assembled audience had not come.

It is now time to divulge the fact that I,

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 3

Bertram Harland, was the reader, and although I am generally the soul of punctuality I was at half-past three nearly a mile away from Mrs. Atwater's on an Elevated train that was delayed, owing to trouble with the third rail. Two is company and three is a crowd, and the Elevated never had any trouble until it introduced the third rail — to the other two.

But at last the train pulled into my station, and I raced down the steps and made my way through slippery streets to "The Waterloo."

The hall man who opened the door for me is also the elevator man, and as I am a frequent visitor to the apartment and know the ways of the elevator I asked if it was running.

"Creepin' 'd be better," was his answer. "There's a reception upstairs, an' it has the heaves."

I was winded by my hurry from the station, so I asked him to "creep me up," and

4 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

we entered the cage together at a quarter to four.

Up, up, up we went. After a time I looked out at the landing and discovered that we were passing the second floor.

"Slow but sure," said I to the attendant.

"It's slow, all right, but ye can't be sure till ye'r up," said he.

Then I heard a voice from above. It was that of Mrs. Atwater.

"Is that you, Mr. Harland?"

"It is I. I beg a thousand pardons. I was detained by a block on the Elevated."

"Oh! I thought maybe it was the elevator that was detaining you. Every one is here, and we're only waiting for you."

"Well, tell them that I am in the building. I'd walk up, but it would put me out of breath. Can't read when I'm out of breath."

"No, of course not," said Mrs. Atwater.

"Well, I'm awfully glad you're here. Thought something dreadful had happened to you. I'll go in and announce you."

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 5

I thought it a trifle premature, for we were only passing the third floor; however, she left and I said to the elevator man: "What sort of an elevator is this?"

"A highdrawlick," said he, as if it were spelled that way.

I told him I thought I recognised the drawl perfectly, but I was somewhat afraid we shouldn't go very high. "She seems to be stopping now," said I.

Michael coaxed her, and at last we passed the fourth floor; then, after an agony of suspense, as the phrase is, I saw the sign "Fifth Floor."

But it was like Moses's view of the promised land — I got no farther. The elevator bobbed and bumped and then came to a dead stop, like Mahomet's coffin mid heaven and earth — or, to be more literal, between the fourth and fifth floors.

"What's up?" said I.

"Not the elevator," said Michael with ill-timed levity.

6 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

"Water given out?"

"No, I'm afear'd somethin's broke."

"Well, let me out," said I, picking up my little satchel containing Shakespeare's plays and the poems of Tennyson, Poe and Browning — for it was on such fare that I was to regale my hearers.

Michael was willing enough. He took my umbrella, and, standing on the seat, tried to reach the latch of the door above. But he could not do it.

"Let me down, and I'll go out at the fourth floor."

"Can't do that, either," said he. "We're caged all right."

"That's a pretty how-de-do. I've got to read to all those people up there."

This plainly interested Michael, and having nothing else to do he proceeded to question me.

"Is it rade to them? What'll you rade to them for?"

"Because they've come to hear me."

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 7

"And can't they rade for themsilves? Sure, my Nelly is only eight, and she can rade."

He was plainly surprised that in this enlightened age such people as he had seen climb the stairs needed to be read to. While he was revolving it in his mind Mrs. Atwater came into the hall again.

"For mercy sakes! What *are* you doing?"

"We're stuck. I'm afraid I can't get out."

"Oh, goodness, but you must come out. Michael, can't you squeeze a little higher and let Mr. Harland out? It's awfully late, and so many of the people are suburbanites, and they are fidgeting."

Michael now seemed to realise for the first time that the case was important. He scratched his head vigorously and finally seemed on the point of saying something, when there came a voice from below.

"Mike!"

8 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

"What is it?"

"Stay up there. There's something broke, and I've telephoned for a man. Don't bring her down."

"I won't," said Michael with a wink at me. It was plain to be seen that he did not mind sitting in the cage doing nothing, earning his wages just the same.

Mrs. Atwater had come down to the half landing, and she looked in at me much as if I were a rare bird that she wished but had not money enough to buy.

"What shall I do, Mr. Harland? All the tickets are bought and paid for, and I hate to give the money back, because the Sunshine Day Nursery needs it so. Could you give the reading to-morrow?"

"You mean if I get out in time? No; I go West to-morrow to be gone until the end of the season. I might give it in here," said I, jokingly.

"Why, to be sure," said matter-of-fact Mrs. Atwater.

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 9

Mrs. Atwater is one of those people who hate to give up a thing once they have decided to do it, and for her a marred ceremony is better than none at all. Better a marriage without a minister or a bride than a postponement of a wedding. Better Hamlet with the hero miles away than no performance; and before I could protest she had run upstairs and disappeared. But I could hear her saying in her earnest voice: "Mr. Harland is stuck between floors on that miserable elevator and he can't get out. How many are willing to listen to him in the hall? All those in favour of it will please signify it in the usual manner."

There was a perfect shout of "ayes."

"Contrary minded."

There were a few feeble "noes," but the question was carried, and out came Mrs. Atwater, her face wreathed in smiles, and said: "It's all right. They can sit on the stairs and in the two halls and they'll hear you perfectly well."

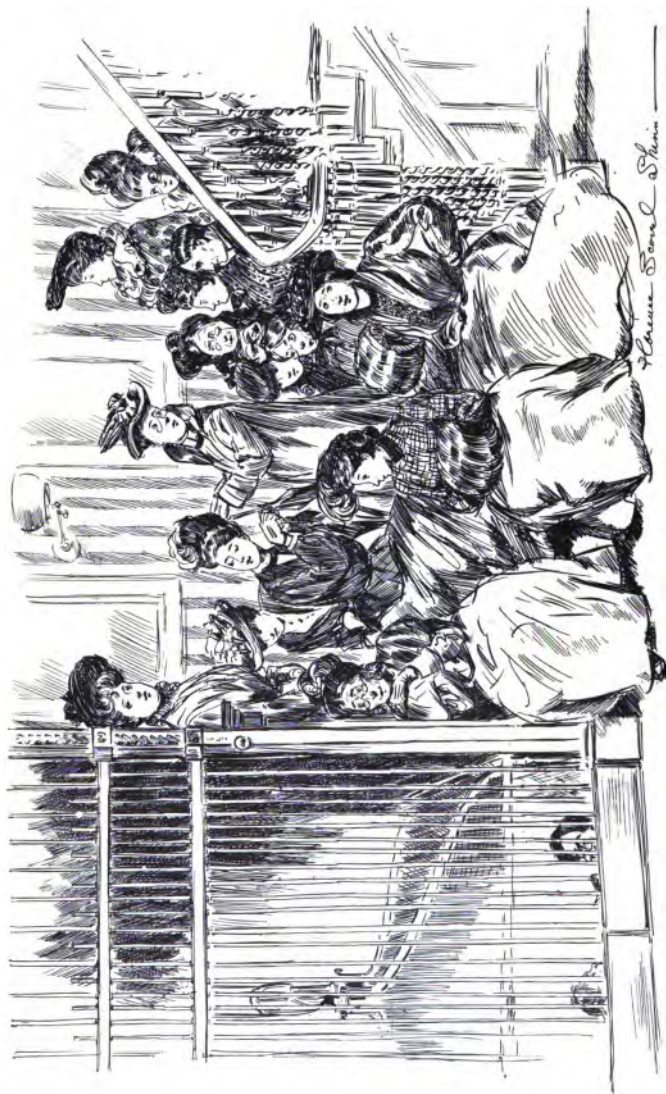
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Something seemed to strike Michael as funny, and I can guess what it was; but Mrs. Atwater, like all very earnest persons, has a very limited sense of the ridiculous, and to her the affair was delightfully unconventional and charming, with nothing incongruous in it.

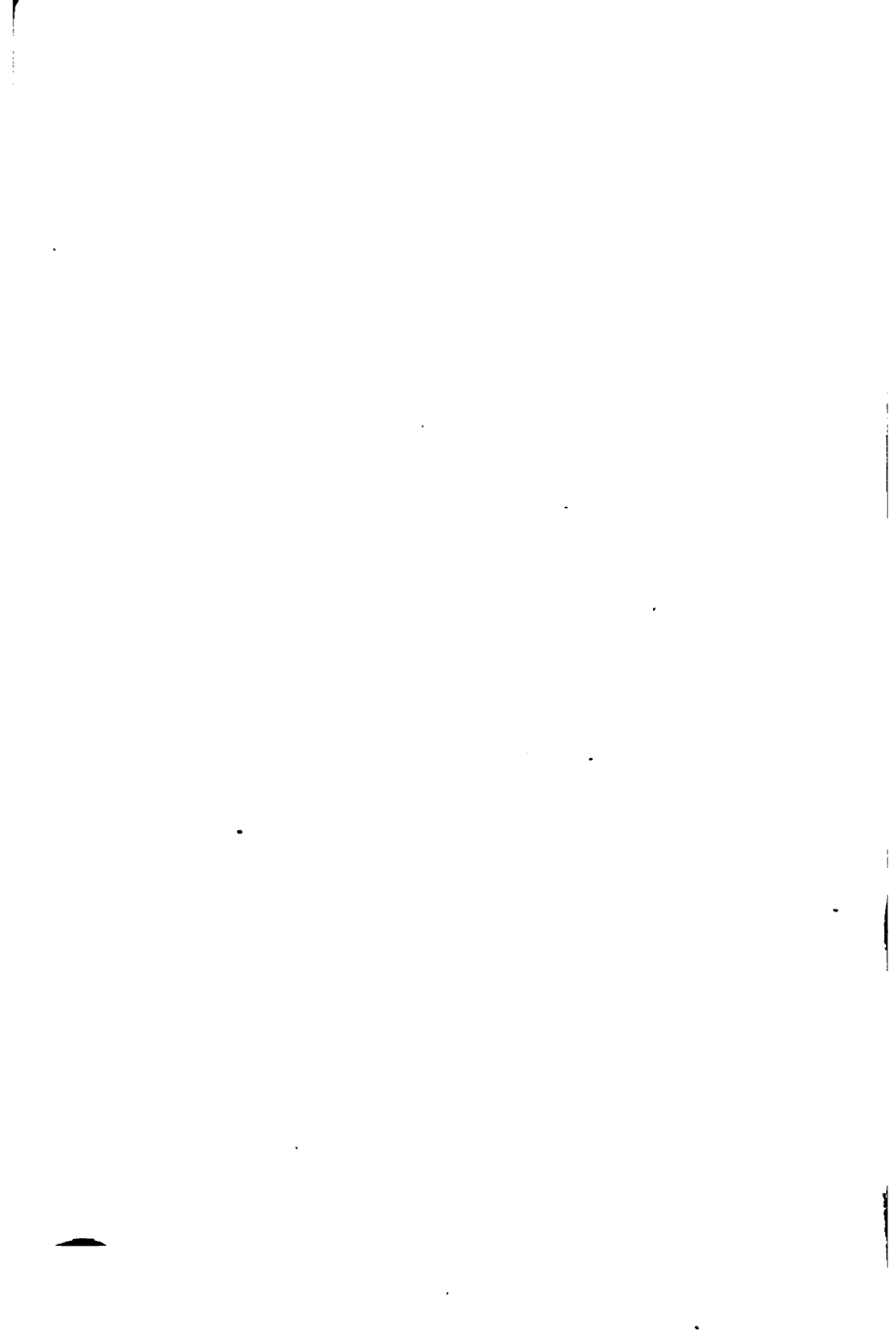
I suppose if I had been doing it merely to oblige I would have refused to become ridiculous for any one; but the seventy-five dollars that was to become mine at the end of the reading was — well, it was seventy-five dollars, and let those who *can*, throw seventy-five dollars away. I have never formed the habit of doing so.

So the people poured out with camp-stools — most of them women, with a sprinkling of girls, and here and there a man who wore upon his face the foolish look that lone men in mobs of women habitually carry.

It took them some minutes to get seated, and then they had to make way for a stout man who lived on the sixth floor, and who



"BEING, AS IT WERE, IN A CAGE."—P. 11.



Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 11

looked an astonishment that was too deep for words as he made his slow way up through the chattering bevy of femininity.

"Ladies and — gentlemen," said I, "I want you to feel that this is quite informal. Platforms, pulpits and soap-boxes, but never an elevator for a rostrum in all my experience, and yet I've had my share of ups and downs."

This provoked a few smiles from the thoughtless, and having broken what ice remained unbroken I said: "Being, as it were, in a cage, there will be a certain appropriateness in my first number, Poe's 'Raven.'"

There was a kid-gloved clapping of hands, a unanimous squeak of camp-stools, and then I began, while Michael sat at my side and stared at me:

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,
weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there
came a tapping —"

12 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

(Voice from main hall: "Mike, what are you doing up there?")

This was followed by the ringing of the elevator bell and giggles from some of the younger women.

Michael (in a whisper):

"I'd like to answer him, sir; that's Mr. Hunt, the agent."

"Go ahead," said I, resolved to make a new start when this interruption should have ceased.

"Mr. Hunt," said Michael, calling down the shaft, "we're stuck between the fourt' and fift' floors, and a gentleman is radin' to the people."

"What's that?" came back in stentorian tones. Michael repeated his information, and then we heard a heavy tread and Mr. Hunt came up. I never shall forget the expression of his face when he saw the crowd of women sitting in the halls and on the stairs.

"What in — time is the matter?"

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 13

I should have liked to sink down the shaft, — in the elevator, — but Mrs. Atwater explained to him in her tense, important way that the reading had been booked for that hour in aid of the Sunshine Day Nursery, and that as Mahomet couldn't come to the mountain the mountain had come to Mahomet.

"Well, I'll be swiggled," was all that Mr. Hunt said. Then he went down, while we heard queer grunts issuing from his throat.

I sat down beside Michael and idly fingered the pretty volume of Poe's poems.

"I think you'd better begin again," said Mrs. Atwater, smiling sweetly at me. "I don't believe there will be any more interruptions, now that Mr. Hunt knows what's the matter."

I was not so sure of that, for I heard hammering in the basement and judged that the machinists had come.

I began again and read along swimmingly for several verses. Although it is highly

14 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

improbable that Michael understood the meaning of the poem, he was alive to the rhythm of the thing, for he kept audible time with his heavy foot until I brought one of mine down on it with decision, and then he stopped, while I went on:

"Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there
wondering, fearing——"

"Wishing that the door they'd ope and let
me out upon the floor."

This interpolated line, as I afterward learned, came from a young Harvard man who was home for the Easter vacation. He was listening at a half-opened door, and his ready wit nearly ended my usefulness as a reader, for not only was his metre perfect, but he "sensed" my wishes exactly. However, I affected not to hear him and went on:

"Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared
to dream before;

But the silence was unbroken——"

Only it wasn't, for here a voice from 'way below called out: "Mike, where's that monkey-wrench?"

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 15

"Oh, for the love of heaven, will ye never stop? Kin I answer him, sir?"

"Yes, answer him, Michael."

"Be the furnace door, I told ye before. Shut up. A gentleman's radin' a story to me."

"Chase yerself," was the derisive message from below, and then I cut in with:

"And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, 'Lenore?'"

Suddenly the impossibility of the whole thing came over me and I looked appealingly at Mrs. Atwater, hoping that she would relieve me; but she was evidently for seeing the thing through to its end, so I continued:

"This I whispered ——"

"Did you say the wrench was by the furnace door?"

This chimed so perfectly with the rhythm that every one noticed it, and I could hear the young collegian chortling in his room; but now I was angry and determined to go on, no matter what happened.

16 Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator

" 'This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore:"

Merely this and nothing more.' "

As if to give me the lie at this juncture a noise like that of a newly opened boiler factory came up the shaft. The workmen were hammering on metal of some kind, and the din came to us as if our ears were at a speaking tube. Hammer! hammer! hammer!

One line was rendered inaudible, so I shouted the next:

" 'Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.' "

This was too much even for Mrs. Atwater, and she dissolved in smiles behind her fan. As for the rest of the audience, they represented every form of laugh.

"Mrs. Atwater," said I, "this has degenerated into a farce and is no longer a reading. I simply can't do anything more until we are released from this. Do you suppose we ever shall get out of here?"

Poe's "Raven" in an Elevator 17

"'Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."'"
(This from the collegian.)

But at this moment there was a cry from below: "All right up there." And Michael, pulling the wire cable, we began to ascend, and a minute later I stepped out upon the fifth floor. I was followed by my audience, excepting Michael, who went to the regions below.

"Now, Mrs. Atwater," I said, "we will continue the reading without further interruptions."

When I left the apartments an hour later I *walked* down the stairs. An elevator can depress as well as elevate.



A West Point Start

IT was in the wintertime and a special train was bearing a company of men up to Syracuse to attend the T. M. A. dinner. Whether T. M. A. stands for Tired Men's Association or Trinitarian Ministers' Alliance or Travelling Men's Amalgamation is not vital to the purposes of this tale. The special had been chartered for pleasure and the host was Tom Chandler, advertising man, who is responsible for the pictures of pretty girls that serve to enliven the advertising pages of the present-day periodicals. He had gathered together a congenial crowd to accompany him, have a good time on the way and make speeches at the dinner.

There were men of business who were glad to take their noses from the grindstone for a few hours; a clever draughtsman who kept up *his* business even on the train, for he drew caricatures of every one in the

party; a clergyman to leaven the lump and an actor to offset him — if he needed offsetting; and in the whole company there was not a man whose life had been plain sailing from the time he had begun to shift for himself.

Why, the clergyman had begun life as a canal boy with a mephitic vocabulary of which it had taken him several years to rid himself, and the actor had studied for the priesthood, but had been seized with doubts of his fitness just about the time the first Pinafore company struck his town, and having a good bass voice he had changed from candles to limelight and a career of varying success. One of the business men had hoped to become a great painter, and had led the struggling, buffeted life of an artist for ten years until it was brought home to him that he had no real talent for the brush; and then he had gone into the real-estate business and made a fortune in five years. On the other hand, the artist had tried business

after business with never a thought of art and never a ghost of success until one day his left arm was broken, and while he was lying idle in bed he had drawn to amuse himself and had discovered that he had the talent that the other man had lacked. And to-day his name is known wherever New York papers penetrate, and jealous artists say he has commercialised his art, and his wife is glad of it because — well, aren't his sons going through college?

Only one, the advertising man, had begun in the line in which he had continued, but he had amassed the biggest fortune, which is perhaps proof that concentrative force along one channel leads a man higher sooner than energies poured into various channels — and perhaps it's only a mixed metaphor.

It took the members of the party an hour really to warm up to the pleasures of the day, but by the time luncheon had been discussed and the fact that it was a pleasure party had dawned on every one they fell to

telling stories, and after several anecdotes with snappers of wit at their tail-end had been perpetrated, and the clergyman had told a capital story of a best man who stole his fee, the man with the curly and extremely red hair and the mobile mouth, who had hitherto kept silence, overcame his diffidence and told a tale of West Point.

"Your story of the dishonest best man," said Robert Green, he of the auburn hair, "reminds me of the turning point in my career which, by a curious coincidence, was also West Point. You said that the scene of your story was laid near Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, which is the next station beyond West Point. Rather far-fetched, but I want to tell my story, and one beginning's as good as another."

"Say," said Tom Chandler at this point, "let's get together so we can hear you better."

After they had formed a semicircle of rattan easy-chairs with Robert Verplanck

Green, the red-headed raconteur, facing them, they all lighted cigars and stretched themselves out comfortably and he began.

"This story begins with me on my uppers, to speak somewhat metaphorically. As a matter of fact, I did have a decent business suit on my back, but only sixty-eight cents between me and bankruptcy. Have any of you ever been as nearly penniless as that?"

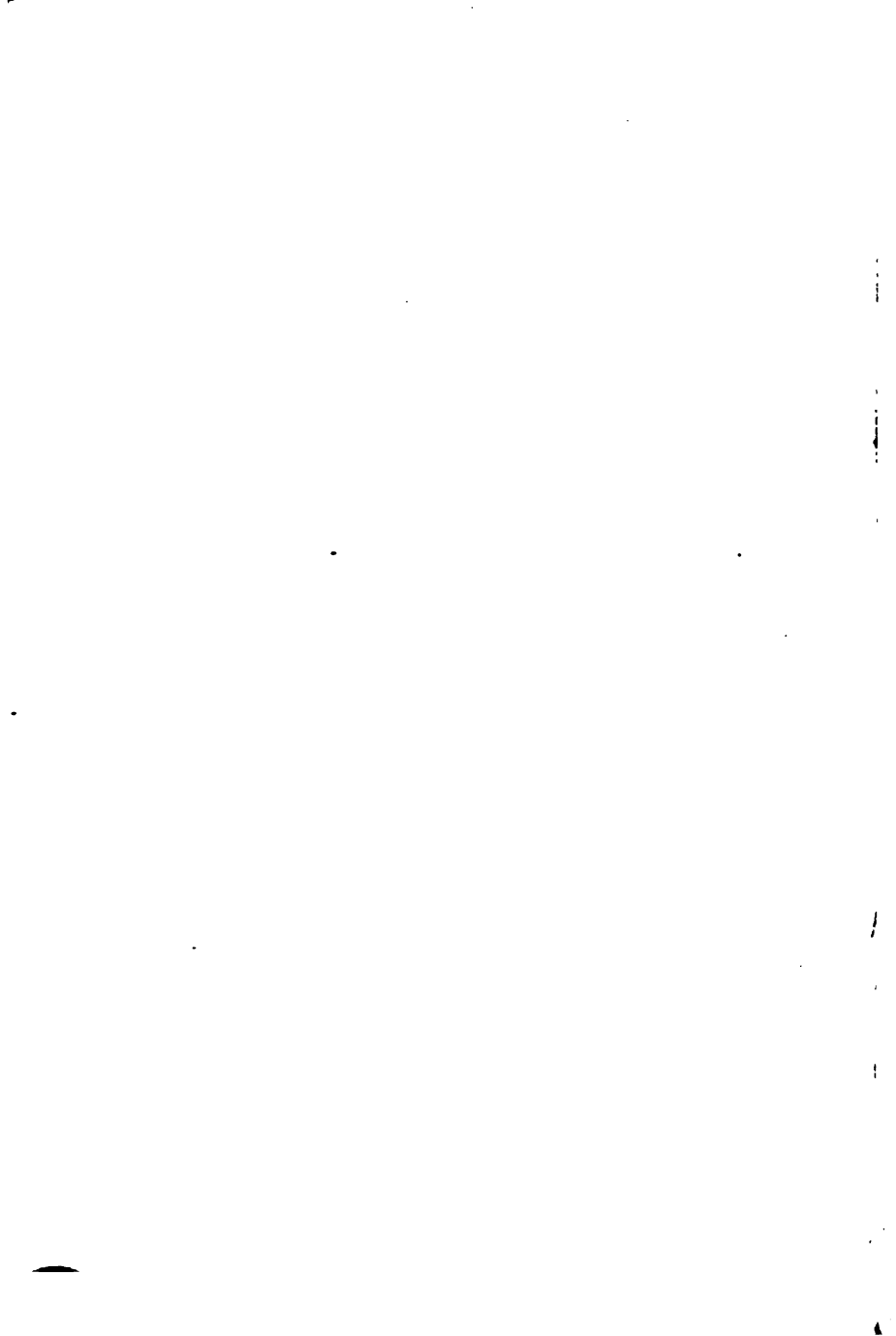
The cartoonist, who was something of a character observer, said in his big bluff voice, "Run along, honey. We've all been there more than once."

"Sure," said the actor, looking up the river toward Troy, and nearly every man in the party nodded assent.

"Well, I had tried hotel clerking and three or four businesses that did not call for any great amount of training, but I was not a success at any of them. In fact, at that time the only thing I could do better than most people was to mimic and impersonate.



"I USED TO SPEND HOURS IN FRONT OF THE LOOKING-GLASS."—
P. 23.



When I was a kid and ought to have been studying my arithmetic I used to spend hours in front of the looking-glass trying to look like a miser or a madman or a minister, and when I wasn't doing that I was apt to be imitating the cries of all the animals I had ever heard and all the dialects I had ever read. I slid through school somehow, but the day I left I could give old Elijah Kellogg's flamboyant speech of Spartacus to the gladiators at Capua, 'Ye call me chieff and ye do *well* — to call him chieff,' etc., with much more spirit and understanding than I could give the various rules of grammar and arithmetic.

"Pretty poor equipment for life, and so I had found it. In the intervals of making stabs at different occupations I tried reciting at Sunday-school and lodge entertainments, but there wasn't much money in it, and I had to satisfy myself for the most part with the thought that here at least there was something I could do without breaking down.

“ Well, one day in December I found myself out of a position in the neighbourhood of West Point with, as I said, just sixty-eight cents in my pocket, a moderately decent suit of clothes on my back, and the rest of the winter before me.

“ I didn’t know a soul from whom I could borrow money, but I did want to get to New York the worst way because I felt that I could easily get something to do there. I’d never been in New York or I might not have been so sanguine.

“ It was snowing hard when I got to West Point and night had settled down. I had intended to go as far as I could and then to try to get a lodging for the night, and the next day I hoped to strike New York, for I was a good walker and sixty-eight cents ought to pay for bed and breakfast somewhere.

“ I don’t know what it was that impelled me to leave the railroad track at West Point and to mount up the steep hill that leads

to the hotel and the Academy buildings, but I did toil up there, and when I was half-way up I knew I was going to seek shelter at the hotel.

“When I passed the buildings of the Military Academy and thought of the youngsters who were learning something that would give them life positions I felt pretty bitter toward them and looked on them as a favoured class. Why hadn’t I been entered at West Point? I was strong, my grandfather had fought in the Rebellion; I really deserved something of my country. Certainly I deserved better than to be on the verge of starvation, with nothing doing and nothing in sight except the winter snow that was very much in evidence and very damp and chilling.

“I reached the hotel in course of time, and going up to the desk I asked the old gentleman who was standing behind it whether he could give me a position as clerk. I think he was the proprietor — or maybe

he was the clerk himself. At any rate he gave me the laugh and said there wasn't enough doing to keep half a man busy; that there were only two guests in the hotel and that they were both going away in a day or two.

"Now I had never begged, because I had never got down quite so low before, but the old chap had a sort of a kindly look about his eyes and I wanted to make that sixty-eight cents last a little longer, so I was just going to ask him for the loan of a dinner when something inside of me said, 'Register, you fool,' and I turned the register around and registered my name and — my birthplace. That was as near home as anything I had, having been an orphan for ten years with a different abiding place for every year.

"When I had trailed out my signature he looked up at the clock and said, 'Supper is ready. Will you go up to your room now or wait until after supper?'

"My stomach said 'Get your supper quick!' but I looked at my hands and said I guessed I'd go and wash them. I've heard of fellows that always dress for dinner, even when they are dining alone in a desert or on a raft in mid-ocean, but I only had one suit, so I limited my preparations to a good wash, and while I was doing it I was asking myself how in the world I was going to pay my board bill.

"You can imagine that supper tasted good, because I had not had a bite since the night before, being anxious to preserve my little hoard of pennies. I won't tell you the names of the things that I ate, because it wasn't so much what they *were* as the way I *felt* at getting them inside of me. An empty stomach never asks questions.

"I lingered long and lovingly over that supper, and the good-natured darky who waited on me helped me twice to roast beef just because I asked him where he was born and gave him a chance to *reminisce*, and I

felt that he had earned the dime I gave him when he had* finished, although I really didn't see how I could afford it. It isn't every waiter that gets one-seventh of a man's capital as a tip.

"When I went back to the office I said to the proprietor, 'Guess it's warmer here than it is in my room, so I'll keep you company if you don't mind.'

"The hotel man was a genial soul with a drawling, comfortable voice, and we sat up to the stove and talked hotel business. I knew a good many of the ins and outs of it, of course, although I wasn't in any danger of becoming a Leland.

"While we were sitting there a young cadet came in to call on his father, who was one of the two guests, and after he left the office I said, 'They're an ugly lot, aren't they? Give you trouble with their pranks?'

"'Oh, no,' said he in his easy, lazy voice, 'they're all right. They're the same stuff that gave us Grant and Sherman and Sheridan, you know. Pretty nice boys.'

"Then I vented what was left of my spleen against West Point, but there really wasn't much. It's hard work to be cross when your stomach is full. I have an idea that the stomach is 'the most ill-tempered member of the body, and when he's busy he has no time to be cross and the rest of you doesn't want to be.

"While we were sitting there talking there came a ring at the telephone bell and the old man stepped to the 'phone.

"The one-sided conversation ran something like this:

" 'Hello! — hellohello! — yes, this is the West Point Hotel.

" 'What? — I didn't get that. You can't get the West Point Mills — oh, you can't get West Point Military Academy. Their telephone's out of order? Yes, I know it. I understand. What do you want? *What-do-you-want?* Hello! hello!

" 'Oh, you're Percival Ingraham, the lecturer. You're to give a lecture there?

“ ‘Oh, you caught cold? What’s that? Hellohello! You caught cold? Oh, you *can’t come!* Yes —

(“ ‘Wait a minute, Central. No, no, I’m not through.) Where are you?

“ ‘At Schenectady? Train delayed? Oh, I *understand*. Want me to send word to the Academy? Sorry *for* you. Hard lines.

“ ‘Yes, I’ll send word. What’s that? Oh, goo’-bye.’ ”

Mr. Green had given a very excellent imitation of the attitude and speech of a man at the telephone — eyes closed, voice steady and low at the beginning, but rising and irascible at the end owing to the interruptions of Central, and when he was through the little pleasure party gave him a round of applause which he took very much as if he were used to it, merely inclining his head and then going on with his story.

“Gentlemen, I don’t know whether you see what I saw, but I want to tell you that

Opportunity was ringing that bell as hard as could be, and just as soon as I gathered from the old man's repetitions that some one was to have lectured at West Point that night I determined to take his place if such a thing were possible. I knew enough about such things to be sure that as far as West Point was concerned the lecturer was minus a fee, but that as far as the cadets were concerned they were hungry for amusement of some kind — and if I could please them at all I stood to win out.

“The old man hung up the receiver and ‘rung off,’ and then he stepped over to the desk and was just going to ring a bell for the hall boy when I said, ‘What’s the trouble?’ and stayed his hand. He was one of those men who can’t do more than one thing at a time, and it never occurred to his hand to bang the bell because his tongue was talking.

“‘Why, this man Percival Ingraham,’ said he, ‘was going to give a lecture over

in Memorial Hall, and he's stuck beyond Schenectady and can't make it. Too bad all 'round. He's done out of his fee and the boys will miss his talk. Telephone's out of order at the Academy and he had to call me up. I could have *told* him the other telephone was out of order because I tried to get Colonel Miller this afternoon and couldn't.'

"While the old man was talking I was making up my mind. I asked him whether the lecturer was known at West Point and he said he knew he'd never appeared there, but that old General Malet, of St. Louis, who was stopping there, had heard him at home and had said he was a splendid lecturer.

"If he was not personally known to the people at West Point I stood some chance of successfully carrying out the scheme that had popped full grown into my head.

"'When was the lecture to begin?' I asked.

"The old man looked at the clock. 'It's due to begin now,' said he.

“ ‘ Well, let me take the message over to the Academy. I’d like to see something of the buildings.’

“ ‘ Oh, dear, no,’ said he; ‘ it’s a wild, stormy night. I’ll send the porter.’

“ ‘ Yes, but I’d like to go,’ said I, getting up and feeling pretty nervous. I felt I *must* go and I didn’t want any misunderstanding of my motive to prevent it.

“ The upshot was that I ran to my room and got on my overcoat and then I came down and learned all I was able to learn from the hotel man. It wasn’t much, but at least I ought to be able to play my part all right. Of course, you’ve tumbled to the fact that I intended to give them a show myself. You know in my business anything is a lecture that isn’t a concert or a sleight-of-hand performance.

“ I turned up my coat collar, put on my gloves, which were not any too warm, and faced the storm. It was a tedious walk in the face of the wind and snow, but I was

urged forward by a desire to do my prettiest before an audience that I felt would be sternly critical and perhaps antagonistic.

"Just as I reached the hall a sleigh drove up to it. It flashed through my mind that it had been down to the station to meet the lecturer, and that in a minute or less the driver would go in and tell the authorities that the lecturer had not arrived unless I could prevent him, so I hurried up to him and said as nonchalantly as I could with my heart doing double time, 'Did you go down to meet me?'

" 'Are you the lecturer, sir?' said he.

" 'Yes,' said I shortly.

" 'Yes, sir. I don't see how I missed you,' said the driver with a good deal of chagrin, and casting an anxious glance at the entrance to the hall as if he expected some one in command to come out and berate him.

" 'You were late,' said I, summoning my nerve, and I could see by his face that I had hit it.

"I was feeling tiptop now. So I handed him a quarter, thereby cutting me down to something like thirty cents.

"The fellow touched his hat and wheeling around he drove off hurriedly and I made my way into the brilliantly lighted building.

"If you've never seen Memorial Hall you ought to run up to West Point some day just to see it. It is a beautiful piece of architecture, worthy of the cause it stands for. It would be beautiful in any land, but it looked particularly beautiful to me, for I was half-frozen from my walk and it was warm inside, and warmth and beauty are the same thing when you're very cold. I was met at the door by a handsome young officer, plainly a Southerner both by his accent and his appearance.

"He was evidently expecting me for he held out his hand and murmured the name of the lecturer. As for me, I plucked up a double handful of courage and said, 'I'm

sorry to be so late and I'm awfully sorry there is no time for me to change to evening clothes. Accident on the road, and I thought I'd better come at once without going to the hotel. Couldn't get you on the telephone.'

" 'No,' said he, 'the telephone has been out of order all day.'

" As he spoke we walked toward the stairs that led to the auditorium and he was in too much of a hurry to notice that I had absolutely no baggage.

" 'Your audience is waiting for you,' said he, 'and the boys are beginning to get a little impatient. I think if you tell them why you're late it will make a good beginning; although I suppose you don't need to be told the proper thing.'

" He led me through the hallway and up a noble staircase decorated with bronze tablets and with portraits, some of them notable by virtue of their painters and others notable solely on account of the subjects, until we

came on one of the most brilliantly lighted halls I was ever in. It did me good to see the light because a great light is one of the best things a lecturer or an actor can have. There were at least three hundred incandescent lights set in the ceiling and they gave a gala air to the stunning-looking audience that was waiting for — waiting for Bob Green, ex-hotel clerk and potential tramp.

“Of course, they thought they were waiting for Percival Ingraham, brilliant lecturer. If they had known the truth then I think there would have been a general exodus, for five feet five surmounted by a mop of red does not ordinarily carry conviction.”

“Were you nervous?” asked Tom Chandler, making the first interruption since Green had begun his story.

“Yes, of course I was, but I was not half so nervous as I had been just after I made up my mind to undertake the deception. In fact, when I actually faced my big audience I was scarcely nervous at all. I couldn’t afford to be.

“ Captain Randolph — that was the name of the young officer who had met me — asked me if I cared to be introduced. ‘ You’re so well known it won’t be necessary, will it?’ he said. I could see that *he* was nervous, and so I said laughingly (and with a great deal of truth), ‘ I’m not so well known as you think, but it really won’t be necessary. I’ll introduce myself and break my own ice.’ And then I mounted the steps that led to the stage and advanced to the table with the inevitable pitcher of water on it, and bowed to my audience.

“ And it was an audience to do a fellow’s heart good and to make even a tyro do good work. In the middle seats were five hundred splendid-looking cadets. I tell you as soon as I saw them all antagonism vanished. They were *so* erect, so stalwart, so natty, so alert. They were flanked on their right by a number of the officers with their wives, the latter in full evening costume to pay honour to the man with thirty cents in his pocket.

On the left of the cadets were the members of the garrison, including the band — minus their instruments. All three classes out for a good time and absolutely depending upon me to give it to them. And me innocent of any sort of lecture.

“I don’t remember just how I opened my remarks, but I do know that when my lack of evening dress was noticed there were several covert glances of surprise, and so I made the most of my predicament, as you may imagine. Whatever I may have said, it seemed to strike the cadets just right, for they burst out into laughter and applause that gave me a boost toward success.

“It wouldn’t interest you if I told all I did, but among other things I imitated Daniel Webster, and not a cadet there could say from personal knowledge that my imitation was a bad one. I had gotten it from my grandfather, who was a born mimic and who happened to be a Member of Congress for several terms while Dan’l was casting

that magnificent eye of his around the chamber and endangering the chandelier's integrity with the thunders of his voice.

"Then I came down to imitations of people I had seen and heard, and told stories, and those boys applauded everything that was worth applauding and I don't know but some things that weren't worth it.

"Well, when I went off and Captain Randolph came around to congratulate me I felt that little Bob Green, ex-hotel clerk and man-in-want-of-a-job, had found it, all right.

"Why, I felt as if I were seven feet high, and as if the United States were Heaven and the cadets were angels, and that it was perpetual summer outside, and that dates were growing on all the trees irrespective of the kind of tree, and that if Daniel Webster could have looked in on my triumph he would have said, '*Never* in my life, young man, did I *ever* enthrall an audience as you have enthralled this one.' Consider what I

had been before supper and you won't blame me for getting the big head.

"The boys went trooping out with their military stride, imitating my imitations, and followed by the officers and their wives and last of all the soldiers of the post, and then the business man of the combine came into the little room and said, 'Well, I suppose that now you'd like me to do a little business with you. It was a good show.'

"And then, for the first time, it struck me that I was in a fair way to become dishonest. Whoever that money belonged to it didn't belong to me and I said impulsively, 'I want to see Colonel Miller.'

"Colonel Miller is the high muckamuck of West Point, and I suppose it was a little like saying to a man in front of the White House, 'Say, will you run in and tell the President that I want to see him out here for about five minutes?' But I got the Colonel and he was a very unassuming, agreeable gentleman, too. I didn't give him

a military salute, but I gave him an ex-hotel clerk's bow and then I said, 'Colonel Miller, were you satisfied with the entertainment this evening?'

"He expressed himself as having been very much delighted and said that it would do the boys good, and when he was through I said:

" 'Thank you, I feel repaid; but I want to say that I can't accept the money that this gentleman wants to give me because — well, you see, I've played a trick on you all.'

"The Colonel stared at me in surprise.

"As hastily and as briefly as I could I told him all about myself and the events of the evening and the temptation to which I had yielded, and I wound up by saying, 'If you think I have earned a fee, all right, but, of course, the money this gentleman has was intended for Mr. Ingraham, and does not belong to me.'

"The Colonel thought a minute, plumping his right fist into his left palm and then reversing the process, and at last he said:

“ ‘Your course was a little unconventional, but you certainly succeeded in amusing the boys, and that’s what they came here for to-night, and although you don’t seem to be a *regular* but only a *volunteer*, still there’s no doubt but you’re the hero of this occasion, and to the victor belong the spoils.’ Then he offered me his hand, waved me toward the treasurer and left the room.

“ But just then I had a new thought, almost as brilliant as the first one. I said, ‘Wait a minute’ to the treasurer and I followed the Colonel out into the auditorium. ‘Colonel Miller,’ said I, ‘would it be out of the ordinary run for me to ask for a testimonial that I can use in a circular? I feel that this is a turning point in my career. If I can entertain West Point cadets I suppose I’ll do for ’most anybody.’

“ The Colonel elevated his brows prodigiously, coughed deeply and pursed up his lips, and then he said, ‘Young man, I wonder *why* you never succeeded before.’

"That was all. Then he left me with the treasurer."

The train slackened up as it ran into Albany. The little group began to say appreciative things to Mr. Green, but the most eminently practical one of the lot, the one who was engineering the excursion, said:

"I'd like to know, if it's a fair question, how much the treasurer had in his pocket for Mr. Ingraham?"

"Two hundred dollars in crisp tens."

"And the owner of the thirty cents got it?"

"He did."

The Song That Sold

IT was on the return trip from the T. M. A. dinner at Syracuse that a demand for a story was made on Tom Chandler. Why it is that when grown men are traveling together and want to have a good time they turn to story telling I do not know, unless it is to prove that at heart they are nothing but children. But that really doesn't need proof, because we all know that the biggest kid at a game of baseball is the old gentleman with the close-clipped sides who howls his head off with delight at a three-bagger. Despite our average solemnity we Americans are children, and children of a pretty decent sort, too, which naturally brings us back to that big child and thorough-going good fellow, Tom Chandler.

After ministering to the necessities of the

crowd that sat around him in the easy wicker chairs and assuring Isaac, the ebon-headed darky, that nothing more was needed of him, Tom made himself comfortable in the swiftly but smoothly moving car and struck a few preliminary chords on his organ of speech.

"I don't know anything you haven't heard — unless it's about myself," said he.

The actor looked as if he would like to deliver a discourse on the same topic, but he said nothing, being a man with a strong grip on himself — "reserve force" the critics call it — and Tom plunged into his story without further delay.

"I believe most of you know," said he, "that I began as errand boy in the office of which I am now the Whole Thing and most of my money has been made in advertising, but I once took a flyer in music that — well I might as well tell you all about it, because it goes to show that once in a while a Happy Fluke will net a man more of the Needful

than months of Honest Toil, and it also shows that Little Tommy knew too much to follow the Will-o'-the-Wisp any farther after he had succeeded in grabbing the gold off her wings.

“About five years ago, when I first began really to realise that there was big money in the advertising business, there was a poor little chap who lived in the same apartment house that sheltered me. I used to meet him climbing up to his room near the clothes-lines, and he had such a sad face that he interested me and I struck up an acquaintance with him. He was an Artist with a capital A and no mistake — wedded to his Art and pledged against divorce, as my friend George Ade would say. Now, I’m not an authority on music, but that little chap could certainly knock some very fetching tones out of that rattletrap piano of his, and when he was playing you forgot that it only cost him about two dollars per month in the way of rent. Upon my word, if you had shut your

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eyes you would have imagined that it was that Alma-Tadema piano that Henry Marquand paid \$60,000 for.

“It was a rattlebox, all right, for whenever I tried to knock harmony out of it chaos resulted, and I used to think it wasn’t worth thirty cents. Possibly it was I who made it look like thirty cents, for I am not a Paderewski a single day in the week.

“The melancholy-eyed musician was not only a pianist but a composer as well, and, as near as I can make out, he believed that he was in the same line as some of the old Harmony Kings who ruled in Europe in the last century, and I am dead sure that as far as externals went he was leading the same kind of life they led. He was up against it morning, noon and night except when he was composing, and then I really believe he was in a suburb of Heaven — just about six miles out and going in as soon as the drawbridge closed.

“He told me that there were four or five

musicians in town who believed in him, and who knew that after the sod was nicely knitted over him people would be getting gay with his music, but that for the present every publisher turned down his music so quick that he had given up showing it at all, and just went on composing to keep himself from being miserable.

“Once or twice I staked him to a dinner because he seemed lonesome eating by himself, and anyway, bread isn’t half so interesting as a table d’hôte dinner with music. However, I want to say that after the first table d’hôte with music my sad-eyed friend suggested that if there was to be a repetition of the festive affair I cut out the music, as it gave him the Willies to hear it.

“Of course you understand that the languages I am using are my own and not the composer’s. He could understand me all right because he came of Proper Americans in the vicinity of Hartford, and in his boyhood — before he became engaged to Music

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— he had indulged in slang, but now, the boy — he wasn't over twenty-five — was generally too miserable to use anything but the best English and he left the slang to me. But he was on to my curves all right and had a kind of humanness about him that made me sorrier than ever for him. Some of these musicians are dead to the world and to everything but themselves and music, but this chap would laugh when I read him a bit out of Dooley, and I understand he had Stevenson by heart, and he knew good architecture from bad, and used to tell me that some day people would wake up and find that we have buildings right here in New York that would have made a Greek happy, for a fortnight.

“One day I took one of little Seventh-Floor-Back's compositions to a musician who is way up in G and I handed it to him to play, telling him that it was a song that my grandmother used to sing when she first landed from Warsaw in 1802, and that I

thought it was rubbish, but that maybe he'd like it because it was so old.

"Well, that musician — he was a real lover of music and not a professional critic at all — he played that thing over and over and over, and he said that it might have been composed by a modern of the moderns, that Richard Strauss would have been glad to father it."

"Don't you mean Johann Strauss?" said the actor with a wise look.

"No, I *don't*. I asked *him* that, and he looked at me kind of tired with a Went-Away-Willy look and said, 'Tom, Richard Strauss is the chief apostle of the music of the future,' and then he said that he didn't believe it possible that my grandmother could ever have sung this in 1802.

"So then I told him that, come to think of it, my grandmother wasn't born until 1830 and that she didn't know Old Dan Tucker from Marching Through Georgia, and that this music was by a little starving

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American composer with a face that would make Russell Sage burst out crying, and a knack with a piano that would make a concert grand out of a melodeon.

"Well, his enthusiasm cooled somewhat, but he still said that it was a very notable piece of music, and that if the young man kept at it long enough he might do something very much worth while, and that if it had really been by Richard Strauss he should be glad to play it in public, but that no one would stand for it as the work of a man living between Third and Fourth Avenues, Borough of Manhattan."

"Hadn't the courage of his convictions, eh?" said the cartoonist, who was the only free silver man in his particular suburb and was proud of his backbone.

"No; few people have," said Tom, flicking the ashes of his cigar all over the waistcoat of the man on his right and then apologising for it.

"Well, now, I've got to side-track the

Dope-Eyed Musician and talk about myself again, and that's always a pleasant task. One day I took it into my head that I could compose a song myself because it seemed to come so easy to my friend. I have a pretty good ear and I can pick out a tune on the piano with any one finger of either hand, including both thumbs, and I found a piece of verse with a catchy line in it and just picked out a tune to it. As soon as I had got it so that I could play it the same three times running I went up six flights and knocked at the door of the composer's room. As good luck would have it he had just finished a piano composition or I might have knocked until I had fox bites on all my knuckles and never got a response. But having got rid of his idea he was lying down on the haircloth-granite sofa that took the place of three chairs and a bed, and when I knocked he said 'Come in.'

"He looked as pale as a ghost and as hungry as a rat, and I found out that he

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had been at work on his composition for ten hours straight away, and, when you realise that he knew that not a publisher in New York City would touch it and that it was all done to the Glory of God, as my old mother used to say, you'll believe that I felt the little Tone Hitter was something of a hero. And I also thought some thinks about the publishers that would have taken up all the dashes in the font to express.

"But quick, before the wonderful air could escape me, I went to the piano and I said, 'Say, Theodore, you're not the only Beethoven on the block and I want you to hear me make Chopin look like thirty cents.'

"Theodore was always a good-natured chap. (By the way, he was named Theodore Thomas after the orchestra leader; his mother had been a great admirer of Thomas when he had an orchestra in New York and so she saddled his name on her first-born, and was tickled to death when he decided to starve to slow music.) Well, as I say,

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he was a good-natured chap, and he actually sat still and let me play my abomination on the piano, and when it was finished he said, with a sort of second-hand smile, 'That is different from both Chopin and Beethoven. It wouldn't have entered their heads to do that.'

"And I told him that I knew *that* was no bouquet from the way it was put up, but if he would set the notes down on paper and then harmonise them so that a no-handed deaf and blind man could play them on sight I'd give him ten dollars.

"Say, boys, it was honest pathetic to see the way his eyes widened when he heard the words Ten Dollars. Gee, the poor chap hadn't supposed there was that much left in the world. In a twinkling he had pushed me from the piano and had played my tune all through without making a mistake, and when he'd finished I said to myself, 'You're all right, Tom Chandler. Conried will want you to write an opera for Caruso and

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Sembrich before the winter is over, and you'll have Harry B. Smith begging your music for his four hundred and fifty-fifth libretto. Oh, I tell you I felt like a conservatory, I was throwing so many bouquets at myself. And it was all in his touch, you see.

"Of course I had a scheme in my head. I wasn't really such a loo-loo as to suppose that I was marching ahead of Mendelssohn, Wagner and Victor Herbert, the sidewalks lined with the populace, and plutocrats in the Waldorf-Astoria waving thousand-dollar bills and crying 'Hurrah for Tom Chandler, the World's Greatest Composer.' I was simply an advertising man with a scheme. I believe that you can place anything from a Uneda firecracker to a fake actor if you advertise enough. I asked Theodore about how many days it would take him to harmonise my immortal work, and he gave me another of his shopworn smiles, and taking out a pencil and paper he began work at

once. Talk about musicians being unbusinesslike! I never saw a man who attended to business like him. Why, the whistle blew six while he was at work, but he never turned a hair, but kept right on, and inside of half an hour he had produced the entire line of goods and spread them out on the keyboard for me. Oh, Motherdearjerusalem, that tune of mine was glorified! It was as if you picked up a bit of dirty, mouse-coloured cloud and allowed the escaping sun to saturate it with its rays for a few seconds until it was turned into a rainbow-coloured palace. I could hear Wagner splashing over the River Styx on his way to tell me that the Chandler-Theodore combine was the best ever, and that if we wouldn't mind taking Tristan and Isolde and not doing a thing to it he would return late that afternoon perfectly happy.

"As soon as the thing was on paper I handed Theodore a ten-dollar bill and then I blew him off to a dinner *without* music. He gave me the address of a music copyist

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to whom I took the music and the verses and asked him to make me a fair copy.

“He was an old, long-haired German on Second Avenue, with a collar that he had begun to wear when Wilhelm moved into that Berlin residence of his, and he had never taken it off out of respect to the Emperor — but he knew good music, all right.

“‘Dot iss de vairst tune I effer heered, but you haf harmoniced it noply,’ he said.

“The next day I took the music down to Sternmeyer & Meyerstern, the eminent publishers of coon songs.

“There was a long line of people waiting to get their songs published, and at every desk in the establishment there sat a broad-jawed tough. I am not much of a heel cooler — one can’t afford to be in my business — and so I passed beyond some of those who had been waiting since early morning for an interview, and I beckoned with authority to one of the toughs. He came up, rolling his head from side to side

with a 'wotderhell' swagger, and I said, 'I'm a very busy man and I want this piece of music tried by your pianist as soon as possible.'

"You see, I knew a little about their ways of doing things, as I helped advertise 'Baby Pulled the Cat to Pieces.'

"'Come in ter-morrer,' said the tough, reaching out for the manuscript.

"'Not on your immortal Sarony,' said I, pulling the music out of his reach. 'In my business there is no such day as *ter-morrer*.' Then, to prevent delay, I showed him my card and it fetched him. Even a publisher of coon songs had heard of my firm, and he said to a younger tough, not over ten, 'Petey, take dis gent's card into Mr. Meyerstern an' see dat he gits it, see?'

"In not more than a minute Mr. Meyerstern came out and bowed oilily to me and I returned the bow as quick as I could. I told him straight from the shoulder what was the matter with me and that I was an adver-

tising man who was prepared to co-operate with him in the floating of a song. 'Never mind who wrote it,' I said, 'but let's have your Paderewski entice it from the piano!'

"The only way to get along with these men is to meet them on their own ground. I saw that I had made a hit with him from the way that he kept repeating 'Entice it from the piano.'

"We went into a little room partitioned off from the private office of the firm and containing two or three chairs, an upright piano and portraits of celebrated people that you never heard of unless you are interested in coon songs. A short-haired young man in a loud suit was playing the raggedest rag-time march I ever heard. He played as well as a mechanical piano, and no matter where he lands he'll be able to earn a living as long as he has those accurate fingers and the muscles in his arms and his sense of rhythm. Rapidity and muscle and a correct ear spell a good salary to any man who is tough

enough to take with the patrons of the Coney Island resorts, and this young man *was* tough enough.

"He played my tune through without a mistake, but it did not sound as good as when Theodore had played. Meyerstern kept his head swinging to it, and when the young man had finished he called in Sternmeyer, saying, 'Otto, this is for us, sure.'

"The young man at the piano said, 'Der tune's catchy, all right, but der harmony's all wrong.' A conflict of authorities. The German copyist had thought the harmony all right, but the *air* needed ventilating in his opinion. Well, I wasn't unduly elated, as I really hadn't much opinion of the ivory thumper's taste, and I stood ready to back my little composer as against myself every day in the week.

"We soon came to terms, and as I am something of a hustler I had them get that song on the market before the end of the next week. When it comes to hustling

Sternmeyer & Meyerstern are supposed to be pretty quick, but, if I do say it, I had them gasping. I made them get out an edition of fifty thousand at the start with a cover design made by one of my own artists—the fellow who did those stunning posters for the Block Island Road that I showed some of you the other day in my office—and owing to my influence as an advertising man I induced some of the old-line houses to handle the song. I also hired through my representatives small boys who belonged to church choirs in the various big cities of the country. They were trained to stand outside of the theatres just about the close of the matinées and sing the song as a quartette and also to distribute handbills at the same time—and it caught the caramel chewers on the first bounce. Of course the little choristers were voted too sweet for any use and the song sold like hot cakes. Then I took up a column in every one of the leading papers all over the country asking the

The Song That Sold 63

question, 'Do you sing (never mind what song it was)? If not, why not? It is good for the voice. Indorsed by every one with a throat. For sale at all music stores.'

"Not only that, but I induced every orchestra leader in New York to play my song at least twice every evening, and in one fashionable uptown church it was sung as an offertory with religious words, and that started up a rumpus that was worth good money to me. And of course I got them to sing it at Feber and Wiolds.

"Well, most of you knew at the time how the song took hold, although I haven't mentioned its name, purposely. It went like wild-fire all over the country, and Sousa, who was at the Paris Exposition, played it in that city, and it made quite an impression on the Boulevardiers as being pretty good music for Indians. I also secured a French edition of it, and three months from the day I sat down to outdo old Beethoven I had cleared \$50,000. I had outdone him.

"It goes to show what advertising will do," concluded Tom as he rose from his chair and cleared his throat.

But his auditors did not seem satisfied. "You're not through," said the actor. "What became of the sad-eyed composer?"

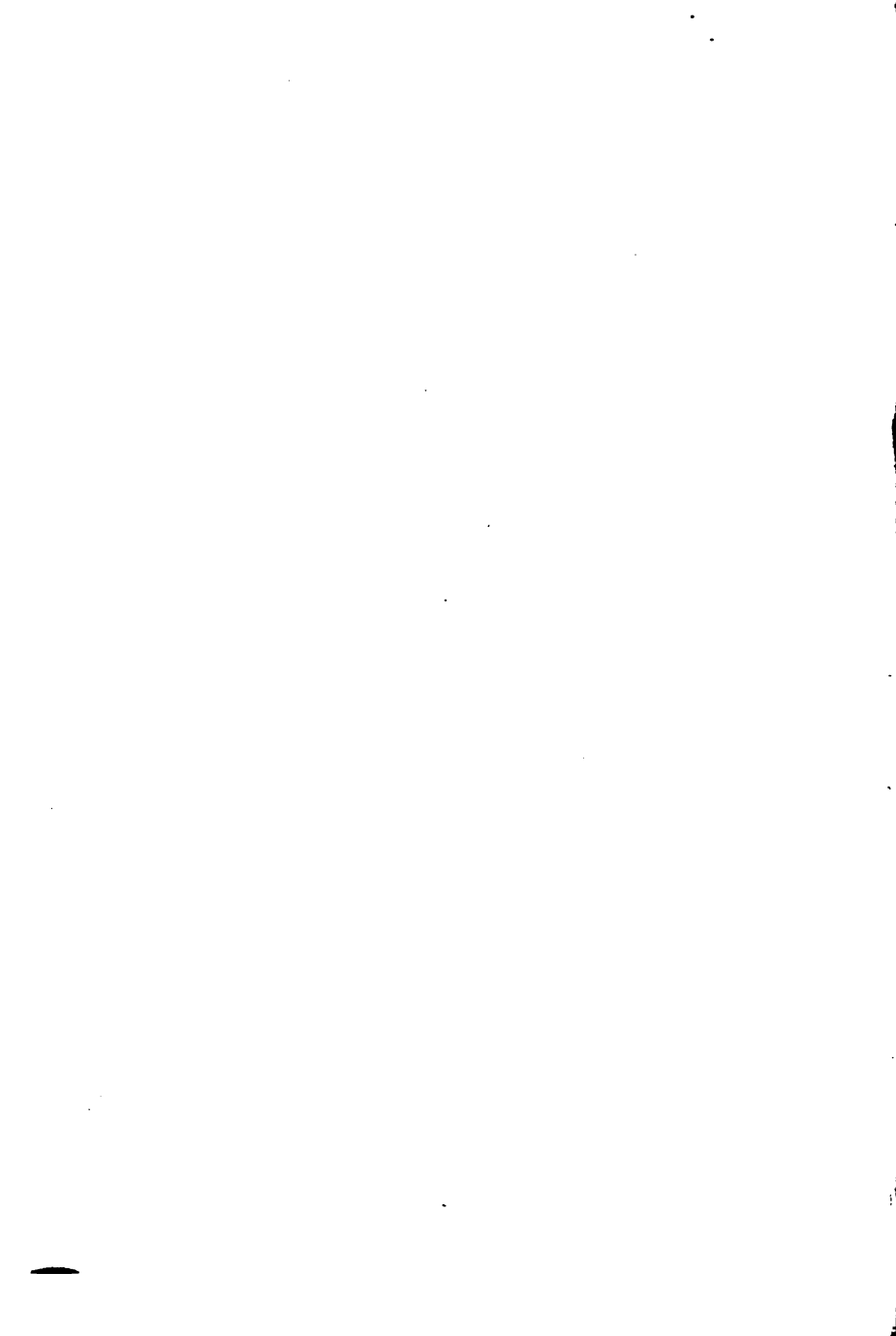
Chandler sat down in his chair again and cast his eye around the expectant ones.

"Well, honest," said he, "I attempted to make him accept half of the money but he wouldn't hear of it. And what's more, he wouldn't allow me to advertise his own music as being by the author of the other thing. He acted a good deal like an ass, I thought. He said, 'I must be true to my feelings, Mr. Chandler. Money is a nice thing to have and I wish I could make such a sum by my music, but I would debase my art if I allowed myself to be advertised through such a song as that. You paid me liberally for my hack work and that ends it.'"

"And did that end it?" persisted the actor.



"THE LITTLE COMPOSER FOUND THAT AMONG THE FURNITURE WAS A GRAND PIANO."—P. 65.



"You bet it didn't. I happened to have a little house up near New Rochelle that was without a tenant. I told Theodore that if he didn't want to make me his enemy for life that he'd have to be its caretaker, and he finally accepted. But that was a good deal to make out of a single song, wasn't it?"

"Chandler, why *don't* you finish your story," asked the clergyman, who was a next-door neighbour of the advertising man and knew him intimately.

"No more to tell," said Chandler.

"Nonsense," said the clergyman. "You haven't any idea of an artistic finish. Well, then, I'll tell it."

All eyes were now turned on the clergyman and he went on: "When the little composer moved up to the cottage at New Rochelle he found that among the furniture was a grand piano and a music cabinet for his manuscripts.

"And the Parisian house recognised the

66 The Song That Sold

musical worth in the harmonisation of the song and asked Mr. Chandler if they might see more of his work, and he sent in one of Theodore's sonatas for piano and violin, and it was immediately published and performed at one of the Colonne concerts. And of course the Parisian *cachet* gave Theodore a start in America and the publishers tumbled over each other to get hold of his work."

"Yes, but that's Theodore's story; that's not my story," said Tom.

"Well, the whole thing sounds like a fairy story," said the actor, "one of the too-good-to-be-true kind."

"But it is true," said Tom; "every word of it except the name of the publishing firm. But what jars me is that I've never had another inspiration."

The Thousand-Dollar Skates

THE company of good fellows were returning in a special car from the dinner that they had attended in Syracuse. They were the guests of that well-known advertising man, Tom Chandler, and they had whiled away the time both going and coming with stories of personal adventure for the most part, and there was no man in the party who was allowed to escape story-telling, although it did not fall to every man to possess the charm of speech or manner of the actor or the cartoonist. With the latter it was not so much what he said as the delightful way he said it, whereas in the case of some of the others it was more the intrinsic interest of the story told than the manner of the telling that made it memorable. The animal painter, the dry-goods man, Tom Chandler himself; in fact each man in the party of twelve had told a

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story, and it now fell to the clergyman to tell his second. His first had been an anecdote of a best man who stole the wedding fee intrusted to him by the groom.

"Doctor Stringer, it's up to you again," said Tom when the laughter following one of his own jokes had subsided. Chandler was just as slangy when addressing the clergyman as he would have been in talking to a man in his own line of endeavour, but for the matter of that Doctor Stringer himself dropped into slang when occasion offered, feeling that a bit of slang was often merely an immigrant to the shores of language and that it might be a matter of but few years when it would hold perhaps an aldermanic position in the body verbal.

Mr. Stringer waved his hands deprecatingly. "I'm a better listener than talker," said he.

"Now you know that's an exaggeration," said Tom, "for I've stood on the outskirts of a Sunday and you did *all* the talking.

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Tell us a church story. It will surely be good."

"Well, then, I'll tell you about little Arthur Boswell and the raising of our church debt. It is a story that I should have labelled 'fiction' if I had read it in a newspaper, but to me its chief interest lies in its being absolutely true down to the last word. I have merely taken the usual prerogative of changing names in order to avoid action for libel in case this ever gets into print."

Here he looked at the special correspondent, who actually winked at him.

"When I became rector of St. Cephas (which was my first charge, by the way) I didn't know that the little church overlooking the Hudson was saddled with a mortgage of fifteen hundred dollars or I shouldn't have accepted the call: I dislike debt as much as some people dislike cats. But as soon as I learned of its existence I determined to wipe it out if such a thing were possible.

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"I will pass over my efforts with my vestry, as they amounted to nothing. If there is anything more ineffectual than the average vestry meeting I have yet to learn of it."

"All business meetings are the same," said the actor, who belonged to the Order of Elks and was a member of his local fire department. "Shakespeare had business meetings in mind when he spoke of 'Words, words, words.'"

The clergyman laughed approvingly and continued: "After my non-success with my vestry I attended a meeting of the Woman's Auxiliary and, knowing that they had the good of the church at heart, I asked them if they did not think it would be a good thing to wipe out the debt, and" (the clergyman laughed softly at the recollection) "one little woman said she thought it would, and that she would embroider initials on handkerchiefs that could afterward be sold for fifty cents apiece at a church fair, and that she would willingly do six of them

The Thousand-Dollar Skates 71

to help along the cause. And another very sporty woman whose husband kept a hotel in the village suggested that we have a turkey raffle at her husband's.

"Of course I sat down promptly on that, for when I became a minister I put aside raffles and all games of chance and many other things that I had indulged in when a boy on the Erie Canal.

"Well, the women did show a good deal of interest in the matter and were much more businesslike than their husbands, but, after all, it was a young lad who had come into the room (in direct disobedience to his mother) to ask where his skates were who eventually extinguished the debt.

" 'Mommer,' said he, looking at me out of the corner of his eyes and picking at the buttons on her waist, 'Mommer.'

"Of course 'Mommer' told him to run along, and equally, of course, he stood stock still, being a boy of average disobedience, and said, 'Mommer, I know a way to pay

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the debt. Sell something to a man for a certain price and then make him sell it to some one else for twice as much, and so on until its sold for what the debt was.'

"This not very lucid exposition was not well received by his mother, who felt that he was disturbing the meeting (although I am sure that she was the only one annoyed). But I called the boy over to me — he was a manly, sturdy, erect little chap of about twelve or thirteen — and I asked him how he came to think of such a thing.

" 'Why,' said he in quick, nervous tones, 'I read the other day about a boy who found a mouse and traded it for a sick cat that he cured, and then swapped her for a lame dog that got over it, and swapped the dog for a pony with the distemper, and the pony got well and he swapped her for a horse, and at last sold the horse for several hundred dollars, and the mouse hadn't cost him a thing. Now if you could get richer and richer or generouser and generouser men,'

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said he, 'to buy a pair of skates or most anything, and they knew they were helping the church, then we'd get a lot, and at last you could go to some of these rich men that they make fun of in the papers — I mean men that feel wicked at having so much money and who want to get right — *you* know — why maybe we could get one of *those* men to buy the skates for a large sum and that would pay the debt, and maybe there'd be money over so's we could build a bigger church than ever. That would be bully, wouldn't it?' said the boy.

" 'Perfectly bully, my son,' said I; 'and I will appoint a committee consisting of you and some of your chums to sell those skates over and over again.'

"Of course, every one thought I was joking excepting Master Arthur. And then tea and cakes were served and Arthur was sent out of the room by his overnervous mother after he had secured a handful of cakes and trod one into the rug, and every one sup-

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posed that the proposal was one of my jokes. For I regret to say that at the outset of my ministry I was inclined to be jocose and it was several years before I lived down my reputation."

"All the same, that was a bright idea of the kid's," said Tom Chandler, whose business mind at once scented possibilities in it.

"It was," said Doctor Stringer, "and Arthur was one of the brightest boys I ever knew. He was a great newspaper reader and really knew more of what was going on in the world than many a man of three times his age. I dare say that more than one of you have read some of his Monday morning surveys of the money market in one of the New York dailies, for Arthur is now a financial reporter at the early age of twenty-two. A brilliant boy.

"However, I don't want to get ahead of my story. At first I had thought to have Arthur and two or three of his chums go around together with a pair of skates that I

donated to the cause, but I soon realised that a man was needed to inspire confidence; and so I asked the clerk of the vestry, a Mr. Turner, as meek as Moses, but a perfect watchdog for integrity, and he and Arthur had a good many amusing experiences, although they were more amusing to Arthur than they were to Mr. Turner, who was totally lacking in a sense of humour. I don't want to make this story too long or I should tell you about his various receptions as he went from parishioner to parishioner. There were several very rich men in my parish but it was not the richest who gave the most, and Arthur sometimes had to try several houses before he could get the subscription next in order. Some would not double the amount but did give sums like twenty or fifty dollars, and that worried the boy a good deal, as he had hoped to double it right along. He had a piece of paper with the problem all worked out. He was aiming at \$1500, the amount of the debt.

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“He told me that he went first to the stingiest man he knew, who happened to be a parishioner, and he explained his plan while Mr. Turner stood by and nodded his head solemnly — so the boy told me — and then Arthur offered to sell him the skates for ten cents — for in these doubling propositions you have to begin with a small amount or you’ll get into millions in no time. The stingy man bought the skates on sight, and then Arthur said it looked as if the whole thing was spoiled because Mr. Stingy wanted to keep the skates for his son, who, it seems, had been clamouring for a pair for over a month — in fact ever since cold weather had set in — and the old man thought that if he could get a pair of standard make for ten cents he would be foolish to let them go; but Arthur pierced his cuticle in some way known to boyhood and came away with the dime and the skates. The first day of his quest he visited six men in moderate circumstances and got money amounting to \$6.30.”

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"Slow work," said the cartoonist, who was in the habit of receiving fifty dollars for a cartoon and whose mind worked in big numbers.

"Yes, the first day was slow, but the second day Arthur and Mr. Turner visited some ten of the richer members of my flock, but only five put their names down for the regular subscription, which was thereby advanced to something like \$200. I've told this story before and I recall the figures. Ah, Chandler's figuring it out."

Tom Chandler had been absent-mindedly calculating what the tenth progression would be, and he now announced it as \$102.40, or \$204.80 for the total.

The clergyman did not seem to like the interruption and drummed with his fingers on the frost-covered pane.

"Some of those who refused to double the amount already given promised to contribute something to bring it to the required sum; some denounced the whole proceeding as

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savouring of bunco, but most of them were pleased at Arthur's straightforward manner and rather enjoyed the fun of buying skates that were doubling in value every few hours.

"But the next day Arthur found it a thankless task. The amount was now in the vicinity of \$100, and, although there were half a dozen millionaires who had villas on the Hudson and who attended my church, Arthur found but one who was willing to give — How much is it?" said Dr. Stringer with just a suspicion of irritation.

"Two hundred and four dollars and eighty cents," said Tom, totally unconscious that he was worrying the good rector.

"That's it. When Arthur came to me that evening he was very non-committal as to his future plans. He said he could count on an even \$500 but he would not tell me where he expected to get the thousand, having totally exhausted our domestic millionaires. My whole congregation did not amount to over one hundred communicants,

which meant that there were not over twenty heads of families.

“The rest of my story will have to be read to you, as it is in the form of a letter. I thought I might be called upon for a story so I provided myself with material.”

Doctor Stringer laughed genially (Tom Chandler had stopped figuring) and took from the inside pocket of his frock coat a letter written in a boyish hand on some ten hotel letter-heads.

“I did not hear from Arthur for a day or two and in the last mail one Saturday night I received this letter from him bearing a New York date of the same day and fully explaining why he had not been to see me. Next morning I saw him in church and he told me the story again, but his written account is better than my memory of his verbal one, although that was very picturesque.

“*‘Dear Mr. Stringer, I thought I would not say anything to you about what I meant to do until it was done because I was afraid*

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that I might fail. But I didn't and Mr. Turner is going to take me to see "Ben Hur" (I wish it were "Babes in Toyland") to-night, so I won't see you till to-morrow, which is the reason for my writing. And anyhow I am glad of the chance because Miss True said that we might write a letter instead of a composition to hand in next Wednesday and that it might be about something that really happened, and this really did. I'm glad it did, for I can't make up.' "

Here Doctor Stringer looked up from the letter to say, "I'm not going to mention the name of the millionaire who figures in this letter otherwise than as Mr. Blank, for I understand that he does not court newspaper publicity."

" ' Mr. Stringer I went down to the office of Mr. Blank with Mr. Turner because I knew he had crowds of money and they say he is generous with it and I thought that \$1000 wouldn't be any more to him than a cent would be to me and you. Mr. Turner

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says to write smaller or I'll use up too much hotel paper. We had lunch here and I am writing in the office at a nice little desk wish I had one like it.' (Arthur's punctuation is not impeccable, but he's only misspelled two or three words in the whole letter.) 'I went down to the office of Mr. Blank and I told a man at a gate that was inside of the office that I wanted to see him and he laughed at me and that made me mad and I said that it was a matter that affected the whole future of St. Cepha's I thought big words would be good and I guess he didn't understand what I meant for he looked kind of astonished, so then I called Mr. Turner and he came up and said what I'd said only kind of bashful. Say, I'll bet Mr. Turner hasn't been in New York much for he acted kind of scared and afterwards I asked him if it was Mr. Blank's money that made him scared. My, I wouldn't be scared of a man just because he had money. So then a door in the back opened and a big man came out

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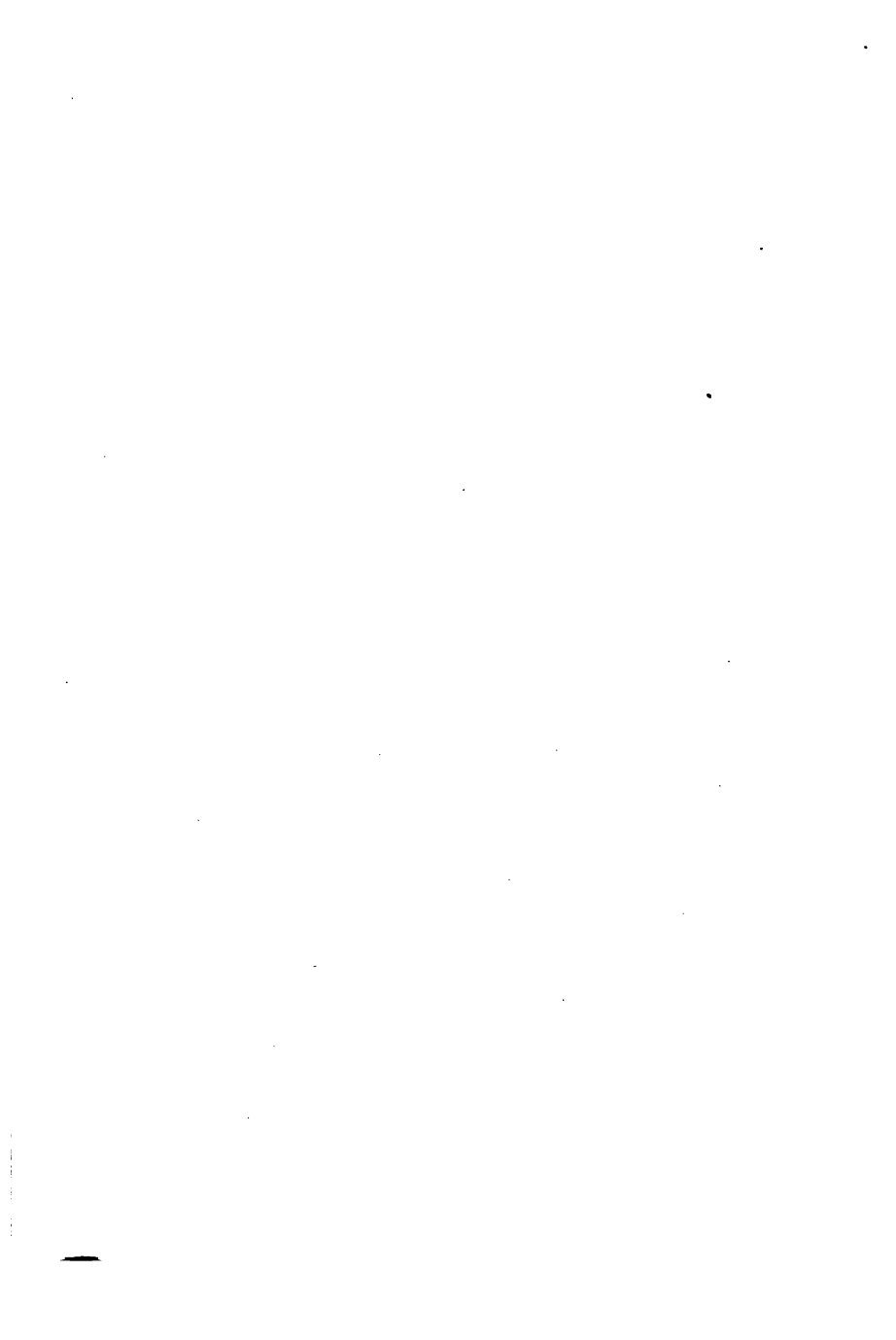
in a hurry and talked very loud and I kind of guessed he was Mr. Blank the way the clerk acted so I said out loud to him "Mr. Blank I want to see you as soon as it's convenient."

" 'Mr. Turner says he expected that we'd both be turned out of the place because he says that Mr. Blank has a quick temper but I'll bet he likes boys for as soon as he heard me he looked around at everybody in sight and kind of chuckled deep down in his throat and then he said "I can see you now sir."

" 'Imagine, he said Sir to me but I think he was only joking. Well Mr. Turner was coming in too but he hasn't much nerve and I told him to stay out. Sometimes when a man shows he's frightened it makes teasers pitch on to him same as a dog will and I think Mr. Blank is a teaser. So I went in alone and Mr. Blank he said as kind as could be "What do you want?" and I said "Mr. Blank I want to sell you a pair of skates for \$1000 for St. Cephas Church" and he just



"HE SAID I'D DOUBLE *HIM* UP IF HE THOUGHT MUCH ABOUT ME."—P 83.



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brought his two fists down on his desk with a bang and he threw his head back and just bellered like a bull. And when he had stopped bellering and I saw he was only laughing *his* way I began to open the box to show him that the skates were all right and that I had them with me. And he wanted to know if I had been long at that sort of business because he didn't know but there might be something in it for him and then I saw he wasn't any one to be afraid of any more than if he hadn't a cent so I told him all about the debt and how people had doubled the money until now we had \$500 and all we needed was just \$1000 and then he bellered some more and he made a joke then. He said I'd double *him* up if he thought much about me and then he asked me if I was American born and I told him I was and glad of it — and I am, you bet — I told him I wouldn't be an Englishman for a good deal because I'd got to them in my history and he told me that when I was older I'd like them

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better and that Bunker Hill was a long time ago and that the English were sorry for it and then I thought that talk about history wouldn't raise any money so I said "Well, will you buy the skates? You're the last one on the list and you may keep them."

"And then he bellered again and said that if he did buy the skates he'd put them in a glass case. And then he asked me a lot of questions about what I learned and what I played and what I wanted to be when I grew up — and say, Mr. Stringer he says that if I decide to go into business and *not* be a soldier that he'll give me a place in his office and then he told me that he was an Episcopalian himself and that surprised me because I didn't suppose those very rich men had any religion and he didn't seem to be giving me the money because he was afraid at all but just because he felt like it. I liked him, Mr. Stringer, because he seemed real and because I'll bet he was a regulyer of a boy when he was young. I told him all about the time

The Thousand-Dollar Skates 85

we went camping last summer at the lake and while I was telling him the clerk brought in a lot of cards to him but he just put them on his desk without looking at them and asked me a lot of questions that showed he was interested in boats and Mr. Turner said I had no business to take up his time that way but he kept asking me questions and he said — honest, Mr. Stringer, he said that next summer if I reminded him of it he'd take me to sail on his steam yacht' (y-o-c-h-t). 'And then he took up his check book and he made out a check for a thousand dollars and gave it to me and I gave him a receipt and then he bellered again although I don't see why he did *that* time and then he walked all the way to the front door with me and shook hands with me and the fellers at the desks stared good and hard and so did Mr. Turner and I told Mr. Blank that it was Mr. Turner and he shook hands with him but not the same way he did with me. Anyhow Mr. Turner

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seemed afraid to shake hands and I think the reason is that he wasn't ever a real boy. He can't swim! But he was awful glad to see the check and he felt so good that he's going to take me to the theatre this evening. No more now as I will see you to-morrow but I don't see why they didn't stop that debt years ago as long as it was so easy to do.

“ ‘ Yours very truly,

“ ‘ ARTHUR BOSWELL.’

“ Well, you may imagine that I read the letter with delight, and when Mr. Turner came around to my rooms at midnight and handed me the check with the signature of the great man on it I felt like doing something substantial for Arthur.”

“ What became of the boy? ” “ Who was the millionaire? ” were the questions put to the rector at this point.

“ Arthur finished his course at the High School and graduated without honours, as he never was much of a student, but I had no fears for his future, and the millionaire was

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as good as his word and took him into his employ."

"Who was the millionaire; was it Rockefeller?" asked a man who ought to have known better.

"I guess it was Pierpont Morgan," said Robert Green, the hero of The West Point Start.

"I'm not at liberty to say which of you is right if *either* is, but as I said a while ago the millionaire saw something in Arthur and to this day he is the friend and adviser of the boy. I met him not long since at a Chamber of Commerce dinner and recalled the story to him, and he told me that he never paid a thousand dollars for anything with more pleasure than when he bought those skates. And then, as Arthur would have said, 'he bellered.'"

The Widow Callahan's Christmas Dinner

VAN TWILLER CARHART never put his hand into his pocket to relieve the necessities of the poor. This was not so much because he did not believe that the poor were worthy of assistance as it was that he hated to give something for nothing. He would willingly pay fifty cents for a cigar that ended in smoke, but as for giving even a quarter to a beggar, why, the beggar might end in smoke before it would occur to him.

I don't want to have you think that he was a bit hard-hearted. If you told him a hard-luck tale at the club he always listened attentively, and on its conclusion he would say: "Dear me! But that's bad, ye know. Awfully sorry to hear that," and then, before you could make an appeal on behalf of

the unfortunate one, he would rise languidly from the divan and go down into the billiard room and try to forget the sorrows of the poor in a game or two.

But the Sunday before Christmas he had attended divine service with that pretty Cartwright girl — one of the Baltimore Cartwrights — and the bishop, who often preaches at St. Yseult's, delivered a short, pithy sermon to the effect that we ought not to be purse-proud and snobbish, but, after the manner of the modern Greeks, we should mingle freely with the poor, and if we cannot help them in other ways, we should at least help them in sympathy and kind words. He finished by saying that, while kind words in themselves went a long way, yet that substantial "pocket help" (as he called it) was apt to make the kind words more memorable. However, that part of the sermon did not appeal to Carhart — that hit his adamant side and glanced off.

Miss Cartwright was deeply moved by the

bishop's words, and on the way down the avenue she told Carhart that she supposed there was no one in the congregation who was not the better for having listened to the sermon, and Carhart assented heartily. He did not know that Miss Cartwright put all her allowance for that month on the plate. He himself, while deeply moved, had been unable to contribute because he had nothing smaller than a dollar bill with him, but he made up his mind to make some one happy on Christmas, if kind words and companionship would do it.

He left Miss Cartwright in quite a glow of feeling by his comments on the bishop's sermon, and he entered the club a few minutes later so thoroughly softened himself that when he heard Abernethy talking about getting up a subscription for the widow of Broker Haviland, who had suffered reverses on Wall street and then shot himself, he deeply regretted once more that a dollar was the smallest bit of change he had, and hur-

ried into the reading room, where he immediately busied himself in writing a letter, and was dead to the world until Abernethy left the club.

Carhart is a bachelor, and lives in the Albert Edward, up near Seventieth street, on Central Park West. That evening, as he sat in his pleasant smoking room, he reflected once more on the words of the bishop. Who was there to whom he could be companionable on Christmas? He knew so few poor people. His man had his wages, and he really did not know a soul who needed kind words from a rich man.

Ah, but there was one, and luckily he remembered her. Bridget Callahan, who had done his washing for years, and who had been their only servant in the old days when his mother did a good share of the household work herself, before his father was lucky enough to buy Bell Telephone stock at twenty-five cents a share.

“Bridget is the very one. I’m sure she

must be poor, because she once told me that she depended on my patronage and that of Mrs. Harkins to keep her above water. I'll go down and dine with her. I'm glad of an excuse for declining the Vangelts' invitation. I'll just go down to Bridget and make her happy, as the bishop advised. Probably she will have nothing more than turkey and simple vegetables, wholesomely cooked, and ice cream for a top-off, while the Vangelts' chef simply kills me with dyspepsia whenever I go there."

Christmas dawned, frosty and glittering. It had snowed the day before, and the air was full of the tinkle of sleigh bells. Carhart spent the morning at the club, and then he bent his steps toward the humble home of Mrs. Callahan. His man had given him the address, nor had he betrayed any emotion at learning that Mr. Carhart expected to dine there. Carhart was rather disappointed. He would have liked it if Stacy had said: "Oh, sir, but that's just like you

to carry Christmas joy to a poor wash-woman."

The air was crisp and the walk invigourating, and by the time Carhart had reached the neighbourhood of Mrs. Callahan's he felt at peace with not only the whole world, but the whole universe as well. He could have wished that the part of Tenth avenue where she lived was a little less savoury looking and smelling, but probably Mrs. Callahan was not a creature of exquisite sensibilities, and she might have felt out of place in a more prosperous neighbourhood.

He finally paused at the number given. A dirty-faced child was blowing a tin horn on the pavement and Carhart asked him where Mrs. Callahan lived.

"T'roo dat hallway in der rear. On der foist floor."

Mrs. Callahan was just about sitting down to a humble dinner of cow's liver and potatoes when the knock came, and seeing Van Twiller, faultlessly attired, she uttered a

94 The Widow Callahan's

"Glory be to God!" of astonishment, not praise, and then opened the door.

"Merry Christmas an' the saints be kind to ye, an' what are ye doin' down here the day? Sure I tuck your wash home last evenin'."

"Merry Christmas to you, Bridget, and many of them. Excuse my glove. I've been thinkin' that maybe I don't do enough to make people happy, don't ye know? Bishop Cotta's nice sort of man. Been preachin' 'bout it. Heard him, you know, and here I am goin' to eat Christmas dinner with you, 'er — for the sake of mother — don't you know?"

Tough and healthy as she was, for a moment Mrs. Callahan felt faint. She had known Van Twiller ever since he was a baby, and she knew that he was as mean as his mother had been before him; but Christmas is a mellowing season, and she herself was dining on liver because she had sent two dollars to the little Shannon orphans around in

Forty-sixth street. And the season must have softened *him*.

"Indade, an' it's the kind man y'are, but it's little I have t' ate, widout yoursilf has ——"

"Oh, dear, no, Bridget, I haven't anything up my sleeve. Not customary for guests to take their own provisions, you know. Just goin' to be neighbourly, you know, for the sake of the day."

Mrs. Callahan rested her fat red chin in her fatter red fingers and looked sideways at the table. "Oh, dear, oh, dear! Barely enuff for wan, an' liver at that. The saints be kin' to yoo, but I think yoo mane well. Sit down, sir, an' ate be yoosilf. It's not for the likes of me to ate wid yoo. Wait an' I'll make a little tay to warm yoo. But, sure, yoo're jokin'?"

"Why, I'm not above jokin', but if you think I don't mean to eat with you, you're mistaken. I may be snobbish, but I'm not as snobbish as that — to-day, at least. My

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grandfather always ate with his hired man, and what are you but my hired girl?"

"Gerrul is it! an' me gran'chil' dead. Well, 'tis a quare Christmas dinner fer the likes of ye, that is used to Dillymoniker's; but, at anny rate, nothin' was ivver sp'iled be me cugin', an' barrin' it's cow's liver instead of calf's, it might be worst."

Carhart afterward said that he never enjoyed a dinner so much in his life. Bridget was a born cook, and, as he said, "if it *was* cow's liver, it must have been a very young cow, don't you know? And the potatoes could not have been flakier if Mr. Sherry himself had boiled them in a gold saucepan."

As for Mrs. Callahan, although she sat down to the table after the tea was drawn, she could not eat a mouthful. She expected the man with the basket up to the last moment. She was not much of a reader — in fact, she did not know how to read, to be quite frank about her, but she divined that somewhere in New York rich men were cele-

brating Christmas by giving repasts to the poor, and that she should have to share her dinner with a man who could have bought out Fulton Market took away her appetite.

But Carhart never for an instant forgot that he was making a humble fellow creature happy by his condescension, and his spirits rose as the food went down until he became almost hilarious.

“How neat your place is, Bridget!” said he, looking around the room. “And I’m glad to see you are economical. Now, you might have had turkey and duck and salmon and strawberries, but they wouldn’t have tasted a bit better than this liver, which is simply delicious.”

But the longest dinners have an end, and at last Carhart rose to go. He would have sat for awhile after dinner, but he was afraid of overwhelming the poor woman with his kindness. He put his hand into his breast pocket, and said, impressively:

“My dear Bridget, we have had a very

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joyful time together, and I am sure that you will like a little souvenir to show to your friends who may have thought me snobbish in the past."

Here the woman's heart grew big with hope again. What a lot of good she could do with his parting gift! She would share it with the Clancys, who had gone to bed supperless the night before.

The hand came out of the breast pocket, and in the fingers thereof was — a visiting card!

Why the Delegate Walked

A STORMY TALE OF A STORM DOOR.

THE storm door needed putting up. It also needed to be painted. I never studied carpentering nor have I ever done any very earnest work at painting, although I did take a few drawing lessons in the Brooklyn Institute in the winter of '75. But that was from casts, and the subject of paint never came up.

To go back to the beginning, the storm door needed to be put up, and every morning, on my departure for the 8:05 train, Mrs. Acton would remind me of it. At last one morning she said: "Henry, we'll have a real cold snap soon and then you'll wish you had engaged some one to put up that door. It saves half a ton of coal a month, I'm sure."

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"I don't doubt it a minute, my dear," said I; "but will you tell me where I am going to get any one who will stoop to such a picayune business as putting up a storm door and painting it? You know very well that Mr. Dahlberg, the carpenter, has told me that I must wait my turn, and that he hoped to get here before spring, but even he couldn't do any more than put it up. We've got to such a state in this country that he couldn't paint it without bringing about sympathetic strikes all over Union County."

"Shall I get a tramp to do it?"

I laughed in Mrs. Acton's face. It was not polite, but when I remembered the tramps that have come to our house and the various disabilities under which they have laboured (or refrained from labouring), it struck me as the height of humour to try to imagine one putting up a storm door or painting it.

There was the tramp that came to me last Tuesday and asked me for the loan of

W. H. U.

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a pair of suspenders until he could get a pair of tighter-fitting trousers. He could not have put up the door, because he had injured his foot in a railway collision in Nebraska and wanted to get to Rahway, where he believed he had a wife who would take care of him, and he had been unable to get there owing to the suspicious nature of most people who doubted his story, but if I didn't believe him he would show me his foot. I say that, of course, I could not ask such a man to put up a heavy vestibuled door, so I loaned him the suspenders — in fact I gave them to him — they had lost their pristine resiliency — and I also gave him the fare one way to Rahway, and I hope he found his wife, although I am bound to say that he walked in the wrong direction after he left the house. But that might have been due to his defective foot.

Over at Peawood, the county seat, there are always husky-looking fellows standing on the corners out of work, but I have

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learned from experience that it is no good to ask them to come and do odd jobs, for the reason that if they did they would no longer be out of work. An out-of-door life has its advantages and so has an out-of-work life.

There are various negroes that I have at different times employed to do odd jobs, and one whom I engaged by postal in Peapack to put up the door walked all the six miles to my town to say that he should be unable to do the work as his sister had a cold. He also asked me if I would give him a quarter for his sister's cold. Now, I had absolutely no use for his sister's cold, but I gave him the quarter, and he also walked away in the opposite direction to where his relative lived. But he must soon have discovered that he had made a mistake, for he stopped in at a saloon to ask the direction. And I guess he found the directions on the bottle.

All of which goes to show how little hope

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I had of getting my storm door on before summer.

My grandmother used to say that if you want a thing done, the best way is to do it yourself, and so I bought a gallon of paint in Fulton Street, New York, and, the next day being Thanksgiving Day, I set to work to paint the door, meaning to let it dry before night and to put it up after dinner.

While I was at work giving everything in sight a coat of green, a well-dressed man, with a nose for paint and a lip that reminded me of one of the most beautiful parts of Ireland, came down the carriage way to where I was at work and said:

“Do you belong to the union?”

“Well, what a thing to ask me?” said I, somewhat puzzled at the question. “My father fought to preserve the Union and I was born in Massachusetts. Of course I belong to the Union. Long may it wave,” said I.

You ought to have seen the contemptuous look that came over his Milesian features.

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"Oh, I don't mean that Union; I mean the painters' union."

I looked at him and I laughed. Then I laughed again. Then a third time I laughed and spilled paint all down my waistcoat, which was in itself a pretty good answer in the negative.

"Do I look like a 'union' man?" said I. "I live in the house there, and this is my barn, and this is my storm door, and this is my paint, and this is my brush, and this is my own hand, and the work is all mine."

He puffed himself up and said:

"My name's O'Shaugnessy and I'm walking delegate for" (so-and-so. I've really forgotten the number or the official name), "and I want you to understand that you have no right to paint unless you're a member of the 'union.'"

I stared at him in amazement and again I told him that it was my house, my barn, my vestibuled door, my paint, my brush and my own hand, and the work was all mine;

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and this time I spattered a little paint on his shoe — quite by accident.

At this he became angry and said, "You understand that you've got to stop."

Now, I suppose it was his intention to anger me at that early stage of the game, but it was Thanksgiving Day, and I was expecting a brother that I hadn't seen for a year and who used to be my best chum when we were boys together, and I didn't feel in the mood to get angry, so I said jocosely:

"Look here, Mr. O'Shaugnessy, I feel it my duty to tell you that my boy is up in his room running a jig-saw and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, he doesn't belong to the jig-sawyers' union, and as I know his mother wants him to get dressed in time for dinner I wish you'd go in there and tell him to stop work or join the union."

But Mr. O'Shaugnessy was a very serious Irishman, who had not been in this country long enough to get used to our jocular way of looking at serious things, and he said very sternly:

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"I don't want no rag-chewin'. You've got to stop paintin' that door or I'll call a sympathetic strike of all the cooks in town."

"Well," said I, "that wouldn't hurt me personally at all, as we lost our cook last week and Mrs. Acton is doing her own cooking, worse luck."

Then I was sorry I had said it, because, of course, she doesn't belong to the cooks' union, and I was afraid that Mr. O'Shaugnessy would feel it incumbent on himself to go in and stop her from cooking our Thanksgiving dinner, and that would have been a calamity, for I'll never get too old to enjoy the turkey-cranberry-pumpkin-cider mix-up.

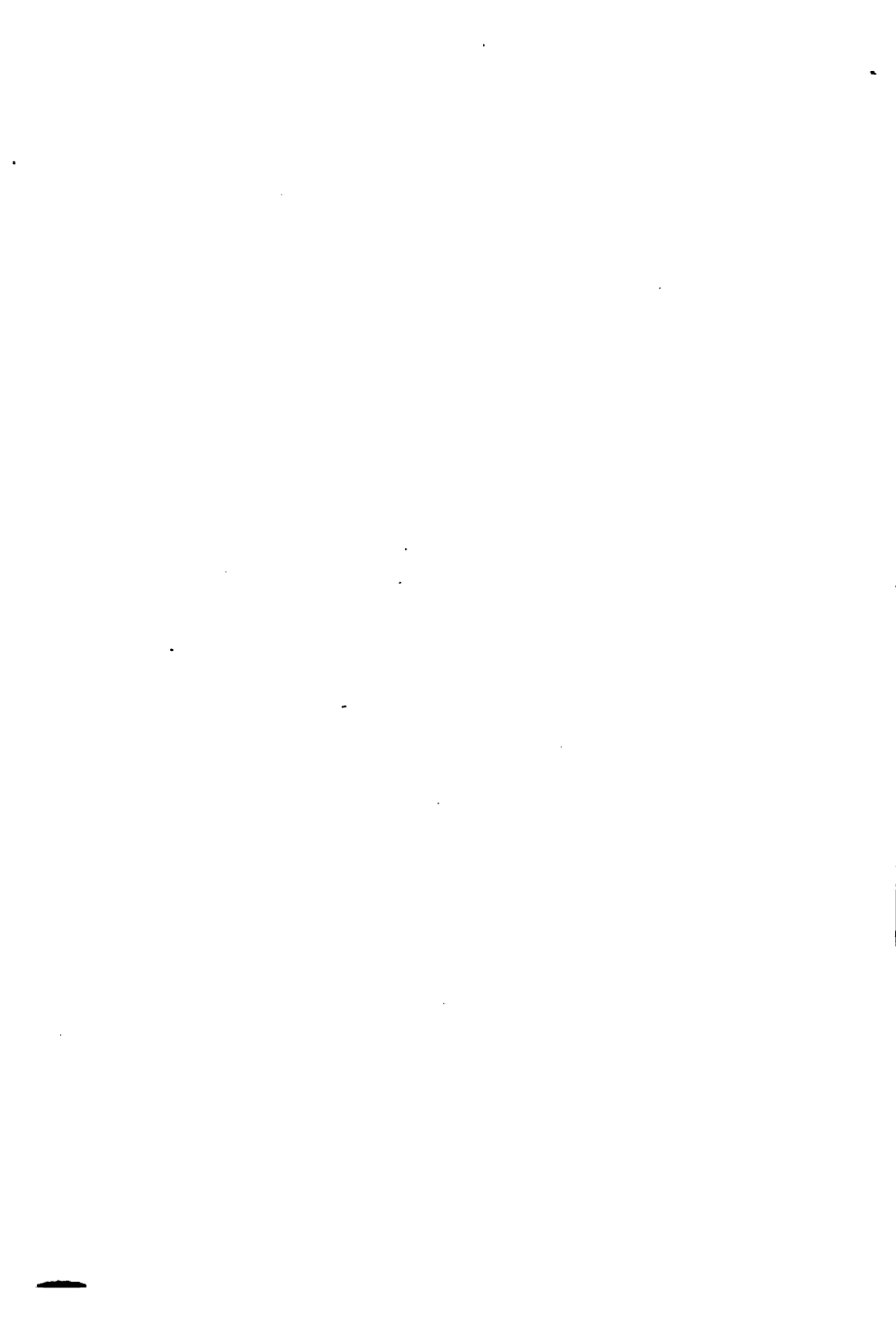
But O'Shaugnessy was a man of set purpose and I was in no danger of sidetracking him.

He said: "You're a very funny man —"

"Am I?" said I. (Heaven save the mark! I have to write jokes for a daily paper.) "Am I? Well, I'll have you understand that I have a perfect right to be



"YOU'VE GOT TO STOP PAINTIN' THAT DOOR OR I'LL CALL A SYMPATHETIC STRIKE OF ALL THE COOKS IN TOWN."—P. 106.



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funny, because I belong to Humourists' Union, New Jersey Branch, No. 678, and we are pledged to keep up the price of jokes and be sparing of our humour. You can't stop me from having my joke, although I'm perfectly willing to sell it if I can find the right purchaser."

Mr. O'Shaugnessy turned a deaf ear to all I had to say. He was not a good listener, and when I had stopped talking and had inadvertently painted the doorknob green, he said:

"I forbid you to do another stroke of work in the name of our union."

"That sounds like Ethan Allen's alleged reply to the British, but I don't acknowledge your authority, and if you haven't anything better to do you will please stroll down the street."

"Do you defy me?" said he, bristling with anger and looking like a turkey-cock — and on Thanksgiving Day, too.

"I don't propose to give you a definition

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of my actions. If you are quick-witted you will understand without a glossary. My name is Acton and I live in that house, and this is my barn and my vestibuled door and my ——”

“Here, give up that brush,” said he with a new note in his voice.

“Harry! Oh, Harry!” I shouted, seeing my son at the back window. He heard me and opened it.

“Telephone for Hank Smith to come here as fast as he can and tell him to bring his handcuffs.”

“Hank Smith is deputy sheriff of my town and he was born and brought up in inner New England, and he hasn’t a very enlightened view as to the uses of “unions.” In fact you have only to tell him a tale of a striker stopping an honest man from working and he is all aflame in an instant.

Mr. O’Shaugnessy refused to take my well-meant hints and continued to threaten me with all sorts of woes, but all the time

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I went on distributing paint impartially over everything in sight, and at last I saw Smith coming across lots at good speed.

"Now," said I, "Mr. O'Shaugnessy, I am nothing but a plain citizen, and owing to early defects in my training I never learned to handle a brush with the freedom of a Sargent, but I think I can handle it with the freedom of an American, and you will kindly oblige me by going to any place you may elect. Our interview is finished."

And then Mr. O'Shaugnessy put up a fight and before I knew what he intended doing he had permitted his fist to find temporary lodgment on my jaw. I am not a fighter—do not belong to the "fighters' union"—but I did manage to give him a slight blood-drawing clip on that part of his face where he keeps his nose, and then Hank Smith came up and seized him. Hank is a giant in strength and O'Shaugnessy was like a baby in his arms.

"What's the matter?" said Hank.

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"Well, it's a walking delegate that refuses to walk in the first place, and it's a breach of the peace in the second, and you saw for yourself that it was assault and battery," said I, rubbing my jaw sympathetically. "He claims that I can't spoil the looks of my own storm door as I don't belong to the painters' union. I claim that I can do what I please on my own land as long as I am not a nuisance to my neighbour. What's your opinion?"

"Well, it's my opinion that this country has come to a pretty pass ——"

"Good enough; then run him in and we'll talk it over at the drug store to-night, Mr. Smith. I've got to wash the paint off of me, and then this afternoon I'll put in an application for membership in the carpenters' union and the screwdrivers' union, and I'll put up that storm door myself and with all the individuality I can put into it. Hope you'll enjoy your walk, Mr. O'Shaugnessy."

'Dam White, A Parable of the Open Door

SUYDAM WHITE was his name. His intimate friends called him 'Dam White. And he was. He was one of those men who, going their way quietly and without any seeming effort to please, draw all men unto them. His clerks would do more for him at a word than some employers are able to compass by threats and rewards. He had no enemies and yet he was by no means a colorless man. He had convictions and was not afraid of voicing them, and he had a temper that could be heated in short order, but there were those who had known him for years and who had never seen his temper hot.

He was in the real-estate business, and his office was just at the head of that broad flight of stairs that is such a feature of the entrance to the Hudson Building.

August Montmorency made his living by selling table wines, and it was said that in fifteen minutes by the clock he could make a total abstainer buy a case of Bordeaux, so great were his powers of persuasion. Be that as it may, he certainly dressed as if his house considered him a valuable man, and his manner was such that if he had been attired in a bathing suit the casual observer would have said, "That man must be a Beau Brummel between baths." And the casual observer would have been quite right.

Suydam White was quiet, reserved, a gentleman by instinct: Montmorency was loud, pompous, swaggering — one who would insist upon the appellation of gentleman if he had to fight for it.

I was present when Suydam White and August Montmorency first met each other, because Mr. White was lunching with me at the Ollapodrida Club uptown, and Mr. Montmorency sat down at our little table with the air of honouring our feast and with-

out a word of apology. I had seen the wine agent before, and I did not like him, but I did not feel like asking him to remove his two hundred pounds to another table, so I introduced him to Mr. White, and after that our duologue resolved itself into a loud-voiced monologue—for Montmorency talked shop — wine shop — incessantly.

There is no denying the fact that Montmorency was handsome, and I have no doubt but that the average woman would vote him charming before he began to talk. Let us hope that the average woman would not like his brassy voice.

Wine was the burden of his song, and who loved not his employer's brand of wine was a fool his whole life long. I wondered how he had ever managed to become a member of the Ollapodrida Club, and I was sorry that I had not chosen a different day for inviting Mr. White to lunch there with me.

It is a fact that can be easily proved that before luncheon was over Mr. White had

ordered a case of Bordeaux sent out to his Mamaroneck home. He told me afterward that he was generally able to say "no" to book agents, and that he could even resist the blandishments of dictionary sellers, but he felt compelled to buy this man's wine although it would take him several years to use it up, as he had found that milk agreed with him better than any other beverage.

"I wish I had had him put out of the room," said I, annoyed that my friend had been buncoed.

"No, it's all right. I'll donate the whole case to our local hospital, so it's all for the best. The man's personality pleased me; it was so full of character ——"

"Bad character."

"Yes, but interesting, nevertheless."

I told him that I thought Montmorency was an infernal nuisance, and that I hoped he would neglect to pay his dues so that he might be dropped from the club.

We had been sitting in the library enjoy-

ing a smoke, and as we passed the pool room on our way out we encountered Montmorancy, who was about to begin a game of pool. He waved his hand airily to us and said in that bull-of-Bashan voice of his, "Glad to have met you, Mr. White. Come up any time you feel like it and lunch on me. Whenever you feel hungry about meal-time just telephone to 518 Spring, and Montie will meet you at the club, and blow you off to something really worth while. Our friend Acton is a stuff, between you and me and the post."

He winked prodigiously and smiled with every wrinkle in his face as he said this last to show that it was mere banter, but I presume that every man in the room felt like kicking him. I know I did.

"Well, I hope we'll never see *him* again," said I as we came down the steps of the club.

"Why, I don't know," said White with his amiable smile. "He's good fun. He's

such an out-and-outer that he amounts to a human document, and I hope I'll run across him again."

Mr. White had his wish. He told me about it himself, and his telling will form act second of this simple little comedy.

It was about two weeks later that I met him downtown by appointment and went to luncheon with him, and while he was waiting for a busy waiter to take his order I asked him if he had seen anything more of Montmorency.

He looked at me in a curious sort of way and said:

"Yes, Acton, I have seen him again and I know more about human nature than I did before. By the way, he came into my office the very next day. I did not see him then and he had no idea that it was *my* office. It was just in the course of his business, but I recognized that blatant voice from where I was sitting in my private office, and I was intensely amused when he sold my book-

keeper a case of Bordeaux, because my bookkeeper loves to hold on to his money. But Montmorency would charm Captain Kidd's treasure right out of the deep where it lies. Of course the whole office had the laugh on the bookkeeper, and the personality of the handsome August was impressed upon all of them.

"About a week ago I went to Indianapolis on business, and while I was there a most distressing thing happened to me. My pocket was picked while I was on my way to the railroad station, and I was left with twenty-five cents — no more than enough for a tip.

"I had a return ticket and my sleeping accommodations, but nothing else except the quarter, and there was not time to hunt any one up as the train would leave in about ten minutes. I had pictured myself eating a very comfortable dinner on the train and I was hungry enough to eat three of them in succession, as I had been so busy all day that

I had not stopped for luncheon. I might have waited over a train, sold my ticket to a scalper and telegraphed to New York for money, but I had to hurry on to meet a man, so I had no alternative but a ride of nearly twenty-eight hours with nothing to eat except as much as a quarter of a dollar would buy, and a quarter is less than thirty cents.

"I paced up and down that platform revolving schemes by which I could get a dollar. I didn't like to brace a total stranger, but I finally picked out a benevolent looking man, evidently a Southerner, who was standing near the gate, and made up my mind to explain my predicament, give him my card and borrow five dollars.

"I approached him and then my courage failed me, and I walked the length of the platform again and when I came back he was not in sight. It now lacked but five minutes of train time and so I rushed out and spent my money on half a dozen bananas. I wouldn't be entirely without food.

"As I turned to go back I heard a loud voice that sounded like the heavenly choir, for it was the voice of an acquaintance. It was Montmorency in a vest like Joseph's coat and with a top coat of the style of season after next, and his face seemed to be shining with friendliness. I was so glad to see him that I rushed at him and shook hands almost as effusively as he would do it by nature. As for him, he nearly squeezed the flesh off my fingers when he shook hands, and he told me that it was good for sore eyes to see me and what was I doing so far from mother, and it was a pity there wasn't time to blow me off to the finest dinner to be had in Indianapolis, but he was going to New York right now and where was I going?

"When I could stem the tide I talked at a Lou Dillon gait myself and with a tone of gladness in my voice that it did me good to hear, for I was saved. I shouldn't have to make six bananas do me for dinner, break-

fast, luncheon and dinner, and I should have a picturesque companion for the journey home. Acton, I blessed the little case of wine that I had bought, for it had created for me a friend in need."

"H-mn," said I, remembering my impressions of Montmorency.

"Well, I told him that he had saved my life; that I, too, was going to New York and that my pocket had been picked and I was penniless, and would he please lend me five dollars?"

"Yes," said I, interrupting White for a moment, "and he put his large hand down into his large pocket and he pulled out a large roll of bills and said in a large way, 'Leave me enough to get home with.' Didn't he?"

"Yes, he didn't," said Mr. White. "He didn't with a big D. He seemed to grow small right before my eyes and he said, 'Really, Mr. White, I'm awfully sorry, but I've made it a rule never to lend money.'

"Well, Acton, you can imagine how mean I felt. I felt as if I were a badly dressed beggar on Union Square in a rainstorm, putting up a lie about a dying wife and money for medicine. Oh, I could have crawled into the keyhole of my watch, I felt so small. He walked along silently toward the train and I fell back a step or two but kept moving, for the train was about to start. At last I pulled myself together and instead of punching him as I felt like doing, I said, 'Will you lend me two dollars until we get to New York? I'm quite certain I'm good for it.'

"'Haven't the slightest doubt in the world,' said he in a hard voice several degrees quieter than usual, 'but it's against my principles.'

"Well, by this time I felt as if I was a tramp who was getting ready to steal a ride to New York. I dropped back and stepped aboard the train at once, and only hoped that we were in different cars."

"Were you?"

"We were, but Acton, if you'll believe it, that despicably mean fellow had the impudence to seek me out and try to sit down by me before we'd got as far as Cumberland."

"What did you do?"

"I? Oh, I was so hot under the collar that I said to him, 'Mr. Montmorency, there isn't room enough in this car for you and me, small as you are, and either you'll change cars or I will.'"

"And what did he do?"

"He laughed kind of uncomfortably and said he didn't mean to be unfriendly, but principles were principles, and then he went forward and I went into the reading-room so mad I couldn't see straight, and I wrote out a telegram that went something like this: 'If Montmorency, wine agent, comes into office I'll give one hundred dollars to the man who throws him downstairs. Suydam White.' That relieved me somewhat."

"How did you send it?"

“ Oh, I handed it in when we stopped at Greenfield and had it sent ‘ collect.’ I was afraid if I waited until I got home my anger would cool off. Oh, but I was mad. I ate three of my bananas, thinking of the meanness of that man, and that left me only three for the next three meals. But while I was stretching my legs at Pittsburg next morning at about half past seven I saw the benevolent-looking old man I had noticed at Indianapolis, and I went up to him boldly and handed him my card and told my story, and he drawled, ‘ Why certainly, my son,’ and the Southern accent never sounded sweeter than it did just then. He was a Missourian and a credit to his State, for he offered me fifty if I wanted it, but I took five and ate all the breakfast I could, and we travelled the rest of the way together and I never enjoyed a trip more. He’d fought on the Confederate side in the Civil War and had known Grant and Buckner and Lee and a lot of generals on both sides, and told me

things about them that I never read in any biographies. A nice old man. His soul would make a million of the size of Montmorency's."

"Well, what about Montmorency and your liberal offer to your clerks?"

"Well, do you know I've forgotten to say anything about it to them. I've been very busy since I got back. I'll have to tell them it was a joke, although I boil whenever I think of that man's meanness."

I was much disappointed at the ending of his story because I had always hated Montmorency, and I hoped to hear that he had received his deserts, and I told White so.

"But it's only in books that such men get caught up with," said I as we threaded our way through Broad Street to his building.

I had a little business to transact with him and we went into his inner office, and while we were talking the outer door opened and we heard the unmistakable voice of Montmorency.

I have said that White is a man who inspires loyalty, and we were to be treated to an exhibition of it. As soon as he heard the sound of the man's voice he opened the door to caution his clerks against taking that telegram literally. But he was too late.

Mr. Montmorency had not finished his opening sentence when the bookkeeper slid from his high stool, came through the gate and stood in the place accorded to customers. Then he said, as he advanced quietly toward the wondering wine agent, "Get out of this office!" The office boy pulled off his coat and hastened to the centre of the stage, and the cashier, a stocky man, vaulted over the counter and approached the beefy Montmorency with fire in his eye.

"One at a time, boys," said the bookkeeper, while Montmorency, plainly at a loss to understand what was happening, retreated a step and looked perplexed. White, suddenly overcome with a desire to laugh, stepped back into his room and pressed his buzzer, but no one noticed the call.

"Will you get out?" said the bookkeeper.

"Not till you put me out. What have I done?"

"Beggars and pedlars aren't admitted into this building, and that wine you sold me puts you in the pedlar class."

So it seemed that the bookkeeper had a private grievance also.

"Here boys, stop," said Mr. White, but he spoke too late. There was a rough and tumble scramble between Montmorency and the small but lithe bookkeeper, and while the office boy was trying to land a shot on him he placed it on the ear of the cashier, who knocked him over backward in a jiffy. But the bookkeeper, though half the size of the mountain of beef, was very strong and the wine agent was unceremoniously hastened to the door, and his passage downstairs was accelerated in quite the comic paper fashion. Nothing but good luck saved him from a broken leg.

He pulled himself together at the foot and

was about to come up again when Mr. White stepped to the door. When Montmorency saw White he must have understood the Whyness of the How, for he whipped out of the doorway like a small boy caught stealing apples from a blind vender.

Suydam White came back trying to keep down the laugh that was struggling for egress. He pulled out a roll of bills, and handed a hundred dollars to the bookkeeper. Then he said:

"George, if you ever have another fight in this office I'll discharge you." He stepped into the inner office for a moment and then coming out he said:

"George, if he ever comes in again, order a case of wine and have it sent to The Jane-way Home at Mamaroneck."

But Montmorency has cut the Hudson Building from his list.

The Education of a Butterfly

FOR years I had read the animal stories of the various writers who gain their bread and butter from the beasts and birds of the forest and field, even as Elisha of old was fed by ravens, but I did not really believe all they told me until I came to know Papillon.

Papillon was the name I gave to a small yellow butterfly who one day emerged bashfully from a cocoon that was hanging on one of the slats of my window-blind.

I had never seen a butterfly come into being before, and I was lost in admiration as the little thing crawled out of her case like an ocean voyager from his travelling-rug. After gently waving her wings to and fro to get the wrinkles out of them, she gave a pretty little yawn, opened her scarlet eyes, and gazed in rapture on the world before

her—a world that consisted of city back yards.

I had no idea just what to feed the beautiful creature that had come to cheer my bachelorhood, but I felt that milk would not be out of the way, so I put a few drops on the window-sill, and the intelligent insect, scarce ten minutes old, began to lap the milk with a sucking noise that I could not have heard if the air had not been strangely still. I remember it was about noon of a July day, and the stillness that precedes a thunder-storm held all the air mute.

I do not know what put it into my head,—perhaps the fact that I had that morning been reading a delightful account of how a naturalist had taught a grizzly bear to wait on table and carve the roasts for him,—but certain it is that I determined to see what I could do in the way of educating my little butterfly.

Across the way from my apartments was the home of Rosalie, a young lady who in-

terested me greatly. I had met her in society and I knew her parents, and I hoped for the day to come when I could woo and win her ; but I was recovering from typhoid, and it would be weeks before I could leave my room. Every morning she came to her window and bowed cheeringly to me, and every morning I waved my hand to her ; but there it rested. If we had been ten years younger, we would have rigged up a thread telegraph wire and sent notes to each other ; but even had I felt like doing such a boyish thing, I should have lacked the ability, for I could do no more than move feebly about my room.

But when, on the second day in the life of little Papillon, I discovered that the creature knew me and would eat from no hand but mine,—as was proved conclusively when my landlady attempted to give her a drop of honey and the graceful little fleck of sunshine fluttered away from it in affright,—I determined to teach her to be my carrier-

pigeon, that she might convey messages to Rosalie in the house across the yards.

It was wonderful how intelligent Papillon showed herself. She soon learned to understand a number of simple words. For instance, I held a sweet pea blossom to her little nose and said softly, "Flower, flower, flower." I never held it to her without saying the word, and after a time she understood that the sweet pea was a flower and a very fragrant one. My next step was to carry the sweet pea to the mantelpiece, and then, as the butterfly poised and swayed on the leaf of a honeysuckle that climbed near my window, I said to her:

"Go to the flower, Papillon."

I had to repeat the phrase many times, but each time I went over to the sweet pea, and at last her little scarlet eyes gleamed with intelligence, and she left the honeysuckle-leaf and flew to the flower.

I then believed the story of the grizzly bear who had acted as waiter.

My next step in little Papillon's education was to take the sweet pea to the window and throw it into the yard below.

"Go and smell it, Papillon," said I, "go and smell it, Papillon," at the same time sniffing vigorously myself and pointing down to where the sweet pea lay on a bed of violets.

Little Papillon was plainly troubled. Her expression showed it. She knew I wanted her to do something, she felt that it was to me that she owed the continuance of her existence, but she did not quite understand my gesture.

So I took another sweet pea, held it to her nostrils, told her to smell it, cast it out of the casement, and said, "Go and smell the flower, Papillon," and the intelligent little beauty flew down into the yard (an absolute *terra incognita* to her) and smelled the sweet pea. Not only that; she tried to pick it up in her little paws and bring it back to me; but it was beyond her strength, and she soon

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returned to her human friend in the window.

Rosalie was plainly interested in my endeavours, and smiled from her window. "Ah," thought I, "if your smiles were solely for me, and not merely a betokening of interest in what I am doing, how happy should I be!"

But I felt that if she did not care for me at all she would not sit in the window with her embroidery, watching every step of my education of Papillon.

There was one peculiar thing about the little butterfly. I never could get her to make her home with me. I prepared a little nest in an abandoned bird-cage, but she would never enter its doors. Her nights were spent in a maple-tree in the neighbouring back yard. She made herself a nest out of bits of grass, some threads which she stole from my landlady, and a little horse-hair that a kindly wind had blown to the tree.

That butterflies built nests was a revela-

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tion to me. If I had been asked about it before her advent, I should have said that they slept at the place where they took their last meal; but Papillon built a nest something like that of a mud-swallow, but more like that of an oriole.

Honey she liked, but milk even more, and no matter how far away she might be, if I cried out, "Papillon, come and get your milk," she would flutter through the air to the window-sill and sip the tasty fluid with avidity and with an expression of gratitude on her face that many a human might emulate.

It was noised abroad that I was educating a butterfly, and for six or seven houses around on both sides of the yards people used to watch me and my little pet.

Butterflies are notoriously volatile, but I taught Papillon to stay in one position for half an hour together by holding up a warning finger whenever she showed signs of flying off. I never punished her in any

way, as I do not believe in harsh educational methods.

One day I noticed that Rosalie had a glass of sweet peas on her window-sill, and I seized the opportunity at once. I said to Papillon, "Go to the sweet peas at Rosalie's." She knew who Rosalie was, for every morning when I sent my love a greeting, I pointed to her and said her name, so that the butterfly might associate the two ideas. So when I told her to go to Rosalie, she went over on as straight a course as a bee would have taken; and as she fluttered over the flowers or buried her nose in their sweet convolutions, Rosalie offered her milk on the end of her finger, and the gentle Papillon sipped it fearlessly.

Animals know who are their friends.

In a few minutes the little creature winged its yellow flight back to the lonely bachelor, who in the meantime had written an ardent message of love and a declaration in the smallest characters readable on the finest tissue-paper.

The day was a golden one in July. All the breezes sang of love. The time was propitious. None of my neighbours was at his window save Rosalie. I folded my love-letter up into smallest compass, tied it with a thread, and then, talking softly to the butterfly that she might not be alarmed, I said:

“Bear this message to Rosalie and the sweet peas.”

I tied a loop in the thread and carefully yoked it over the head of the delicate Papillon, half fearing that the thread would abrade her. Still the paper weighed but the fraction of a grain, and Papillon had been well nurtured.

Over the abyss she flew to the fair one in the house beyond. She had accomplished four-fifths of her journey when she wavered, and I thought she would have fallen to earth; but Rosalie said something cheering, and Papillon made the rest of the way in safety. I saw the fair girl take the yoke from where it rested, open the paper, and read the message.

Then she stooped over and whispered something in the ear of my little butterfly. I hastily caught up a pair of field-glasses, and through them I saw the little creature wave her wings—with her, a gesture of assent. Then I saw Rosalie give her a drop of refreshing milk, and the brave Papillon flew back across the low-lying yards to my window. Why had she not waited for an answer? Why had my love not sent a message to me?

I was soon to receive a proof that butterflies are almost human, for Papillon, after resting a moment, flew up to my lips and touched them delicately with her antennæ three times. She had understood what Rosalie had whispered to her. She had brought me love's message.

But that was not all. Papillon felt that her mission was not yet accomplished. What followed would have been marvellous in an ordinary butterfly. I hesitate to give this final proof of her sagacity, yet it is bet-

ter to tell the whole truth and be doubted than to hold back any facts important to natural history.

Little Papillon had often watched me writing letters, and she knew that the black fluid in my writing-case made marks on paper that were full of meaning. I say she knew it. How else can I account for her flying to the ink-well, dipping one tiny foot in the vessel, and slowly and laboriously drawing upon the window-sill the crude representation of a heart? As a drawing it had nothing to commend it; as the work of an insect not two months old it was remarkable.

When I thought of its purport, I threw a kiss to Rosalie at the window.

How the Cricket Cricks

I USED to have an aunt who always insisted that naturalists were simply lazy men who wanted an excuse for their laziness and, not caring for fishing, pretended to be watching the ways and works of ants and bees when half the time they were dozing on the ground, and that they afterward invented wonderful stories which they put forth as the result of their keen observation and tireless patience.

So much by way of preamble. A little preambuling is a pleasant gait to adopt while people are getting to their seats and removing their wraps, and making up their minds whether they care to listen or not. Now for the essay on the musical habits of the cricket.

The other day I sat at my desk, wishing that I had a good excuse to lay down my pen and bemoaning the fact that the nearest fishing grounds were far away.

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As I sat making meaningless marks with a reluctant pen my nephew came into the room and said: "Oh, Uncle, come and see a cricket making music. He's got a kind of tent on his back, and he keeps rubbing the flaps together and the music comes. I hid behind a footstool and watched him."

Here was my excuse for neglecting the pen, and I arose with alacrity and followed him. Just then he was called away on an errand by my sister, so I went into the sitting-room alone. The air was full of music, but at first I could not locate the little fellow, who in his best blacks was practising like a Paganini. I stood still and looked around, and at last I discovered him near the window.

The clock struck nine. The day was comparatively young, and I would watch him and send the result of my observations to some scientific paper.

I could see from where I stood, some ten feet distant, that he was large and fat and

sober looking, but he was evidently cheerful or else he would not have found time in his busy life to make music for himself.

By the way, I wonder why it is that when the grand concert of crickets and katydids and locusts begins the birds stop singing. Is it for envy of the more sustained tones of the long-legged folk in the grass, or is it because the birds honestly admire that which in June and July was the music of the future but in August is the veriest commonplace? Here is a question for John Burroughs or some other capable authority to settle. Personally I regret that the birds see fit to stop, because there is surely room for the song of the bobolink with a cricket obligato.

As I was saying, this cricket was large and fat and sober, and yet his song was much above the ordinary cheeping of his fellows. But as soon as I stepped a little nearer he showed he had temperament by immediately stopping.

It is a universal habit with crickets and

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with peepers. Peepers particularly have lots of temperament. Their peeping is really not so wonderful, but they guard it jealously, and if in your walks abroad you approach their immediate vicinity they lay aside their violins or flageolets or accordeons or whatever it is that they fill the air with — or fill with air — and their song is no more heard until you have passed on.

A man who has no temperament and who is playing the piano when you knock will continue playing as he asks you to open the door and will say, "Hallo, Harry, sit down. Isn't this a lovely thing I'm trying over?" and he will go on to the perhaps bitter end. But a temperamental performer on voice or instrument may have been pouring forth, or hitting or scraping divine tones, but as your step is heard he will stop as if he had been shot and will tell you that he is out of practice or has a horried cold or ate too much lobster salad the night before and so cannot play the violin in good form. That's temperament, and my cricket had it hard.

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I was too far off to see what he had been playing, but if it was a violin probably he wrapped it up in a red bandanna and put it reverently into its case. Then, taking out an invisible whisk, he began to brush himself vigorously.

I walked a-tiptoe over to where he stood in the sun and laid myself down upon the hard floor with my cheek in my hand, and, saying, "Patience be with me," began to watch him. I thought that if I didn't say a word he would finally conclude that I was a new-fangled piece of automatic furniture without ears and would begin to tune up once more.

But he was a foxy cricket. He had evidently lived in the house for some time, and he knew furniture by sight and was sure that it stayed put, and he was not going to sing for a human audience if he knew it. He brushed himself off, working very hard at an invisible spot of dust on his coat-tail, but his fiddle was laid to rest.

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A naturalist was certainly spoiled in me, for I assure you that I lay there for a good half-hour as immovable as the stocks, and all that time the cricket stood there and discovered new flecks of dust on his immaculate coat-tails. And now and then he would stop long enough in his work to give me a sidelong glance as much as to say, "Music isn't necessary for my existence and I object to being spied on, but if you want to know how to clean clothes, watch me."

As I lay there I remembered that I had read somewhere that Henry Drummond once lay beside an ant-hill for a period of seventy-two hours, watching the busy citizens, without stirring once or taking nourishment other than an occasional ant.

And at last my patience was rewarded even as his had been. The cricket began to grow until he had attained to mammoth proportions. I should say that he was something between an elephant and an extinct mastodon in size, and he now lived in a wood.

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I lay perfectly still, afraid to breathe lest he should step on me. His form had not changed at all, but he had stopped brushing himself; and I was glad of that, for it would have raised such a cloud of dust that I had surely suffocated. He raised huge wings and began to scrape them, and a tremendous drone resulted, so deep in its vibrations that Brooklyn Bridge, which somehow lay just north of the jungle, parted its cables and went into the East River with an awful splash. I was much interested in this verification of a scientific allegation, yet at the same time I was afraid that my turn would come next and that my members would part company to slow music, so I awoke.

The music went up about seventeen octaves, but it continued vigorously; and there was the cricket sitting on my cheekbone just out of vision but not more than an inch from my ear and playing for dear life. He had finally decided that I was a settle and, as he thought, he was practising in retirement.

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Now had I been a Lubbock or a Drummond I would have lain there until he had lugged his Stradivarius over to the bridge of my nose and tried to part it by his vibrations, but I had had enough. Besides, the clock was striking twelve.

I worked my facial muscles until he decided there was a seismic disturbance in his vicinity and, putting his oboe — if it was an oboe — into its case, he leaped from my cheek clean out of the window and I saw him no more.

But I no longer hold with my aunt's views on naturalists. If three hours in the sun on a hard floor will make a man as logy and as cross and as uncomfortable as I became, no lazy man (who is generally a comfortable man) would lie on an anthill in South Africa beneath the tropic sun under the delusion that he was loafing.

Their Wedding Day

I WAS travelling last summer up through Vermont on the sort of journey that it pleases me to make now and then. That is, I did not really know my destination, but relied on my instinct to indicate a good stopping-place. I had a mileage book and the conductor seemed amused because I had twice decided to stay on the train a little longer. A certain village had attracted me, but just as I was about getting off the train I saw the big chimney of a factory and concluded to go to a place where it was absolutely "country."

At Rutland a young man of some twenty-four years came aboard and sat down beside me. As a general thing I do not invite confidences, perhaps because of a certain austerity of demeanour, an inheritance from my grandfather, but quite belying my natural disposition. I never hold aloof from people

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and I am always glad if a seat-mate will talk to me, but he rarely will.

This man, however, would have talked to a graven image. He was one of those whose hearts are worn upon the sleeves of any garment they may happen to be in, and after the usual weather imbecilities had passed he said:

"I'll bet I'm the happiest man on this train."

Now I was feeling rather happy myself, inasmuch as it was my first day of a well-earned vacation, and I questioned his assertion, saying:

"You must have an extra good reason if you're any happier than I am. A man who can't be happy in such weather as this in a countryside like this must be a pessimist."

"Well, I'm a Methodist myself, but it ain't religion that makes me happy. Fact is," said he, after a pause in which he seemed to be waiting for me to ask the cause of his content, "the fact is that I'm going to be

married to-day to the prettiest girl in the county."

I would have resented it if some people had exposed their hearts so shamelessly, as it were, but this young fellow was so simple, so perfectly ingenuous that I was no more abashed than if a child had given me a similar bit of news about a playmate.

I congratulated him and he smiled as if at pleasant thoughts, and went on:

"Yes, half a dozen fellers were after her, but me and Cy Allen came in ahead. She said she didn't care a rap which one of us she married, and if I didn't get to the house in time she'd marry Cy anyway. Cy's to be my best man — that is," said he, with a sly chuckle, "if he gets there in time."

"Do you mean to tell me that this Cy wanted to marry the young lady and yet consents to be your best man?"

"Why not? We've be'n friends all our lives. If she'd taken Cy I was go'n' to be best man for him. You see ther's lots of

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pretty girls around and if I didn't get Jenny I'd get some other."

I was a bit disgusted. "Oh, then, it wouldn't disappoint you if you didn't marry her?"

"Yes it would," said he earnestly, "yes it would, now, seein' she's chose me. She was my first choice among all the girls and I'd rather lose my job than lose her."

"What is your job?" asked I.

"I'm foreman in a machine shop in Rutland."

This suggested some questions quite irrelevant to the subject we had been pursuing, but interesting to me and so interesting to him that we became absorbed in our talk. My subconsciousness told me that we stopped at a flag station; indeed I read its name as we pulled out, but I never would have thought of it again if our passing a gigantic elm, evidently a landmark for miles around, had not caused my friend to say with an oath, "Why, we've passed Grantley!"

"Yes, that was the last station. I noticed the name as we passed."

"Jumpin' Judas! That's where I was go'n' to get off. That's where Jenny lives."

He pulled out his watch and looked at it. "Half-past ten and we're to be married at eleven."

I became sympathetic at once. "Can't you go back on the next train?" said I.

"Ain't no passenger train until twelve."

"Can't you walk back?"

He shook his head. "Not in time. It's four miles."

"Well, she'll wait, won't she?"

"That's the pesky part of it. She won't wait, not if Cy gets to her before I do."

"Oh, Cy isn't there, then?"

Again the sly smile. "Well, I rather guess not. I think he missed this train."

A picture of a man getting off from the car ahead at Grantley came to me and I said:

"There was a man jumped off at Grantley."

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“Jumpin’ Ju —— What sort of lookin’ man was he?”

What a curious thing the mind is. I had hardly been conscious of the descent of the passenger but now I was able to recollect his appearance.

“He was red-headed and he had a flaring moustache — a fierce one.”

“Cy! He caught it, after all. I watched the platform till the train came in at Rutland and I didn’t see him, and I was the last to swing on. He must ha’ got on on the other side. Ye see, I had a friend of mine in Rutland delay him a little because he’s a little bit tricky, and although I asked him to be best man I intended gettin’ the bindin’ part of the ceremony over before he come. I didn’t mind his bein’ best man with Jenny my better half. Lost her, by thunder! I can’t get there by eleven.”

I endeavoured to console him, although he really seemed like a comic opera figure and not to be taken seriously.

"But you say there are lots of other ones to be had for the mere asking."

"Yes, but they ain't Jenny, after all. I'd sort of set my heart on marryin' her to-day, and it's disappointin'."

We were slowing up for the next station.

"Maybe you're not too late yet. Why don't you telephone from here?"

"By George, I hadn't thought of that. You get off here?"

"Yes, I might as well as not," said I, getting my suit-case out of the rack. My mileage had been torn off for twenty miles farther, but I made up my mind to stop off and see this comedy through.

"If I can help you any way, I'd like to," said I.

"You might telephone," said he as we stepped off the car. "I ain't used to the pesky things."

We went toward a pay-station which was in the general store opposite the station and I said, "What's Miss Jenny's number?"

"By — ginger!" said he, "she ain't got a telephone."

I could have kicked him for an imbecile. There were perhaps seven houses in the place and they were painfully plain. Nothing picturesque about them. Was it for this I had got off the train? The marriage incident closed and I set down at Nowhere.

The blunderer looked the picture of despair for a minute and then his eye lighted up and he said, "There's a telephone in Grantley's feed store. Maybe Jim Grantley would carry a message to Jenny. It ain't more'n an eighth of a mile."

We were standing on the steps of the general store.

"To be sure," said I. "Hurry, man." I looked at my own watch. "It's a quarter to eleven."

"Tremblin' Moses!" said he. "Only fifteen minutes. Cy won't wait a minute after eleven."

He was so flustered that I took matters



Florence Seavey Skinn —

"HE SAYS HE'S JUST GOING TO CLOSE THE STORE TO GO TO YOUR WEDDING."—P. 155.



into my own hands. We entered the store and I said briskly, "I'd like to use your telephone."

"Help yourself," said the pleasant-faced storekeeper; "automatic."

I opened the telephone book and easily found the number I wanted, as it was the only telephone in Grantley.

"Give me 108-1," said I.

In a minute "Central" told me to drop in the toll and I did so, and heard the musical "ding" that told her I had done so.

"Go ahead," said "Central."

"Is this Grantley's?"

"Yes, what do you want? Hurry up, for I'm just shuttin' up the store."

I don't know what prompted me, but I said:

"Going to the wedding?"

"Yes. Who be you?"

I turned to the disconsolate bridegroom. "It's the feed store. What do you want to say? He says he's just going to close the store to go to your wedding."

"Tell him I want to speak to Jenny Fosdick."

"Hold on a minute," said I to the feed store. Then I turned to the bridegroom. "It isn't likely that Miss Fosdick will come to the store in all her wedding finery. Where is she being married?"

"Gosh, I hope nowher'," said he with a sickly grin; "but it's to be in her boarding-house — at Mrs. Sefton's. Jenny's an orphan."

"Hello! hello!" came impatiently from the feed store.

"You'd better call for your friend Cy."

He hesitated and again the question came from Grantley, "Who be you? Git a gait on."

I ignored the feed man's question as to who was calling him up, and taking matters into my own hands once more I said:

"Tell Cyrus — (What's his name?)"

"Allen. Cy Allen," said the bridegroom.

"Tell Cy Allen to come to the 'phone and

call up — call up 107-1 as soon as he can. Very important.”

“Why, he’s to be best man at the wedding,” said the feed man.

“I know it,” said I; “but it’s very important.”

“All right, good-by,” and as he forgot to ring off I heard him running out of the store.

So far so good, but now suppose Cyrus did not come to the telephone until he had married Jenny? And when he did come, what could I say? I was not going to lie to oblige my friend, and he did not seem to have a great deal of initiative himself.

“By the way, what’s your name?” said I.

“Alonzo Buckingham.”

Now, my grandmother on the maternal side was a Buckingham, of Manchester, Vermont, and as I am interested in genealogical matters we compared notes, and I found to my astonishment that this raw-

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boned, simple-minded youth was my fourth cousin once removed. This gave him a new hold on my allegiance and I determined to help him even to the point of stretching the truth, for the attitude of Cyrus was, you might almost say, criminal, and — circumstances alter cases.

“What’ll I tell him when he comes?” said I, when I judged it was time for Cyrus to have reached the store.

“Tell him I got carried by and that I’m coming back at noon. Ask him to wait. Tell him I’d do as much for him.”

“Look here,” said I with amused disgust. “You can’t expect him to wait if matters stand the way they do. You’ve lost a point by missing your station, and if he doesn’t take advantage of it he doesn’t deserve Miss Fosdick either.”

“Why; don’t you think I deserve her?”

“Never mind that — what are you going to say?”

He hesitated. I looked at my watch. It was five minutes to eleven.

"I'm sorry I didn't insist on Miss Fosdick's coming," said I. "She could have chosen between you." I was as keenly interested in this game now as if I had been about to marry her myself.

The telephone bell rang.

"Hello, who's that?" said I.

"Cy Allen. Who wants me?"

Alonzo, who was standing at the door of the booth, looked inspired. "Tell him to come to his uncle's house on the freight. There's a freight leaves Grantley just after eleven."

"Did you say his uncle is sick?" said I to Alonzo, with a lack of straightforwardness that was reprehensible. I also held my mouth to the transmitter so that Cy could hear me.

"Is Uncle Will sick?" said Cyrus, a note of alarm in his voice. Evidently the young man was fond of his uncle.

I feigned not to understand.

"Come at once. Bub-bub-bub-bub-bub. Has the freight passed?"

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He heard the last part all right.

"No, the freight is here now."

"Take it," said I; "bub-bub-bub-bub-bub."

"I don't get that last. What's the matter with Uncle Will?"

"What did you say? Don't miss the freight."

"I say, *what is the matter with Uncle Will?*"

"Say that again," said I, although I felt sorry for him. Alonzo, who could hear Cyrus almost as plainly as I, was doubled up with mirth.

"I'll take the train. What do you say is the matter with Uncle Will. I get everything but that? Won't the two o'clock do?"

"Your Uncle Will bub-bub-bub-bub-bub."

"Burst a blood vessel?"

"Don't delay," said I, and with a sudden inspiration I rang off.

"Will he take the train?" said I as I came out of the box.

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"Yes, he will. He thinks a heap of his Uncle Will. You know Cyrus lives here with his uncle but he works in Rutland in the same shop I do. He introduced me to Jenny."

"Oh, that's it? Well, I guess you've got him away from her now. But how are you going to get back there? Can you hire a team?"

Alonzo's eyes brightened. "That freight meets one here! I'll go back on it and explain how it happened to Jenny, and then we'll get married."

"Suppose Cyrus sees you when he gets off the train. He'll suspect something and may follow you back."

Alonzo thought a minute. Then he turned to the storekeeper who had been waiting on a little girl all through our colloquy. "Has the down-freight come in?"

"Just this minute," was the answer.

"It waits here for the up one, doesn't it?"

"Yes, unless the other's late? Then they pass at Grantley."

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"Thank you. Good-day."

We crossed over to the station and there stood the train about a hundred yards below on a siding.

"Now you want to keep out of sight of your friend."

"I know it, but I'd love to see him get off the train. He never was so badly fooled as he will be when he gets here and finds his Uncle Will all right."

"How do you know he's all right? Maybe something has happened to him."

"Don't look much like it," said Alonzo, pointing to a very tall, stout man who was unloading milk cans. "He's waiting for empties on the up-freight and Cy'll see him the first thing."

"I think it's a shame to play on a fellow's feelings that way," said I.

Alonzo grinned. He was not real handsome. "Yes," said he, "but it had to be or else I'd be courting some girl not half as nice as Jenny."

Alonzo was just about the stature that thinks itself irresistible — short, but stretching upward all the time in order to make the most of his inches.

“You needn’t buy a ticket. I have mileage,” said I.

We walked down to the caboose and boarded it and sat down in a corner well out of sight. It was not at all likely that Cyrus would see Alonzo.

It was a good quarter of an hour before we heard the whistle of the up-freight.

Alonzo began to chuckle. “It’ll be a wedding without a best man, but Uncle Will’ll be glad to see Cy.”

The freight pulled slowly in and came to a stop and a minute later we pulled out.

I walked to the car platform, for being unknown it would make no difference if Cy did see me.

I did not see him get off, but I did see him talking to his uncle in the doorway of the station and I half expected him to start and

run for our train, for Uncle Will was certainly the picture of health. On the contrary, Cy seemed to be amused at something, and just before we ran out of sight Uncle Will slapped him on the back.

He had evidently determined to make the best of it.

We made the journey to Grantley in high spirits. I was most anxious to see "Jenny" and find out what sort of a looking girl she was.

At last we pulled up at the station. As we alighted I noticed that the platform was covered with rice.

"Hello, they're preparing for you," said I.

A man who turned out to be Mr. Grantley was talking to the station agent. He turned and saw Alonzo and said, "Well, you're a nice feller. I thought this was your wedding day?"

"So it is," said Alonzo, somewhat sheepishly. "I missed the station, that was all."

"You missed the bride, you mean."

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“Why, where’s Jenny Fosdick?”

“There ain’t no such person. She waited until eleven for you, and then the minister married her to Cy Allen on the platform right here and they’ve gone to Hillston on the freight. Cy’s Uncle Will had a stroke, or suthin’ happened to him. He couldn’t quite make out. Kind of sad beginnin’ for their honeymoon.”

“Mrs. Smith’s Husband”

IT is a well-known fact that some men have wives and some women have husbands. For your own peace of mind, O woman, when you are marrying, see that you become a wife and do not merely get a husband. When a man is known as “Mrs. Smith’s husband,” his character is published to the world by his title and the lines of Mrs. Smith are not cast in pleasant places. He may be capable in his own way, he may even be the bread-winner of the family, but depend upon it, he will be content to win the mere loaf — any butter that is needed will come by Mrs. Smith’s tact and management.

“Mrs. Smith’s husband” cannot drive a nail any more than he can drive a horse. He cannot draw a tack any more than he can draw a prize in a lottery. When he goes away for the summer it is Mrs. Smith who

does the packing, buys the tickets, sees that none of the children are left behind. “Mrs. Smith’s husband” is a willing enough soul; he hates to see Mrs. Smith vex her mind with odious details; he says again and again, “Why don’t you hire the packing done?” But his salary is eighteen dollars a week, which does not leave a great margin for the luxury of extra “help.”

And what a roaring farce he makes of carpet-beating. He is asked by Mrs. Smith to beat the parlour rug, and with her help he gets it over the line. And then what playful taps he gives it! A curlew’s wing would expel far more dust than do his ineffectual thwacks. Goaded to action by his inertia, Mrs. Smith at last comes out, and with absolutely no muscle, but any amount of will power, she makes the dust fly until the back yard resembles Sahara during a simoon.

“Mrs. Smith’s husband” learns nothing by experience. Wakened suddenly in the night by his wife and told to get the pare-

goric, quickly, he always asks in a dazed and injured way, "Where is it?" This in spite of the fact that James is their fifth baby, and the paregoric is always put in the same place in the cupboard by the careful and methodical Mrs. Smith. He finds the paregoric at last after the usual knee-knockings and toe-torturings and shin-scrapings, and then Mrs. Smith, who is trying to quiet screaming James by all the ways known to a mother, says, "Drop some into a tumbler. Quick!"

"Where is the tumbler?" asks "Mrs. Smith's husband," helplessly.

"Oh, Johnny, you will be the death of me. There's a whole bargain sale of tumblers in the kitchen cupboard, and the spoons are where they've always been since we were married—in the left-hand drawer of the dresser, and the water is in the faucet if the pipes aren't frozen. Do hurry, the poor child is suffering so." And "Mrs. Smith's husband" hurries in his incompetent way

and breaks a tumbler and drops the spoon long before he begins to drop the medicine. At last, the spoon poised and the bottle in mid-air, “How many drops?” Then Mrs. Smith, being of a sarcastic turn, cannot forbear saying, even though it delay the dropping, “John Smith, we’ve had five children, and they’ve all needed paregoric about once in so often, and you’ve always had to drop it, and if you don’t know how many drops you’d better call in Dr. Hall to-morrow, because you’ve probably got incipient paresis.”

And “Mrs. Smith’s husband,” being a mild-mannered man, says pleasantly, but drowsily, “So you always say, my dear, but it doesn’t answer my question. I want to help, you know, and I do want to get back to bed. James kept us up last night and the night be ——”

“I don’t see how you ever remember how many cents there are in a dollar, or how to find your car fare. Ten drops is the dose you’ve given every child since Gustavus

Adolphus was first taken sick twelve or thirteen years ago, but you will ask how many drops, when our fifth child is writhing in agony and waiting for the medicine that doesn't come."

Which is the strict truth. "Mrs. Smith's husband"—and his other name is legion—cannot think at all without his wife's help.

Thinking for two, she grows old twice as fast as he does, and when he is thirty she is about sixty—although she wouldn't admit it. Growing old so much faster than he, she at last comes to look upon him as her eldest child. He generally calls her "mother," because he hears the children do it, but she never calls him "father." She sticks to the ante-nuptial diminutive, and he is "Johnny" to her to the end of the chapter.

His children do not take him seriously. They see that it is Mrs. Smith who stands at the motor. He, like them, is only a passenger, and he gets the scant courtesy accorded passengers by their fellows.

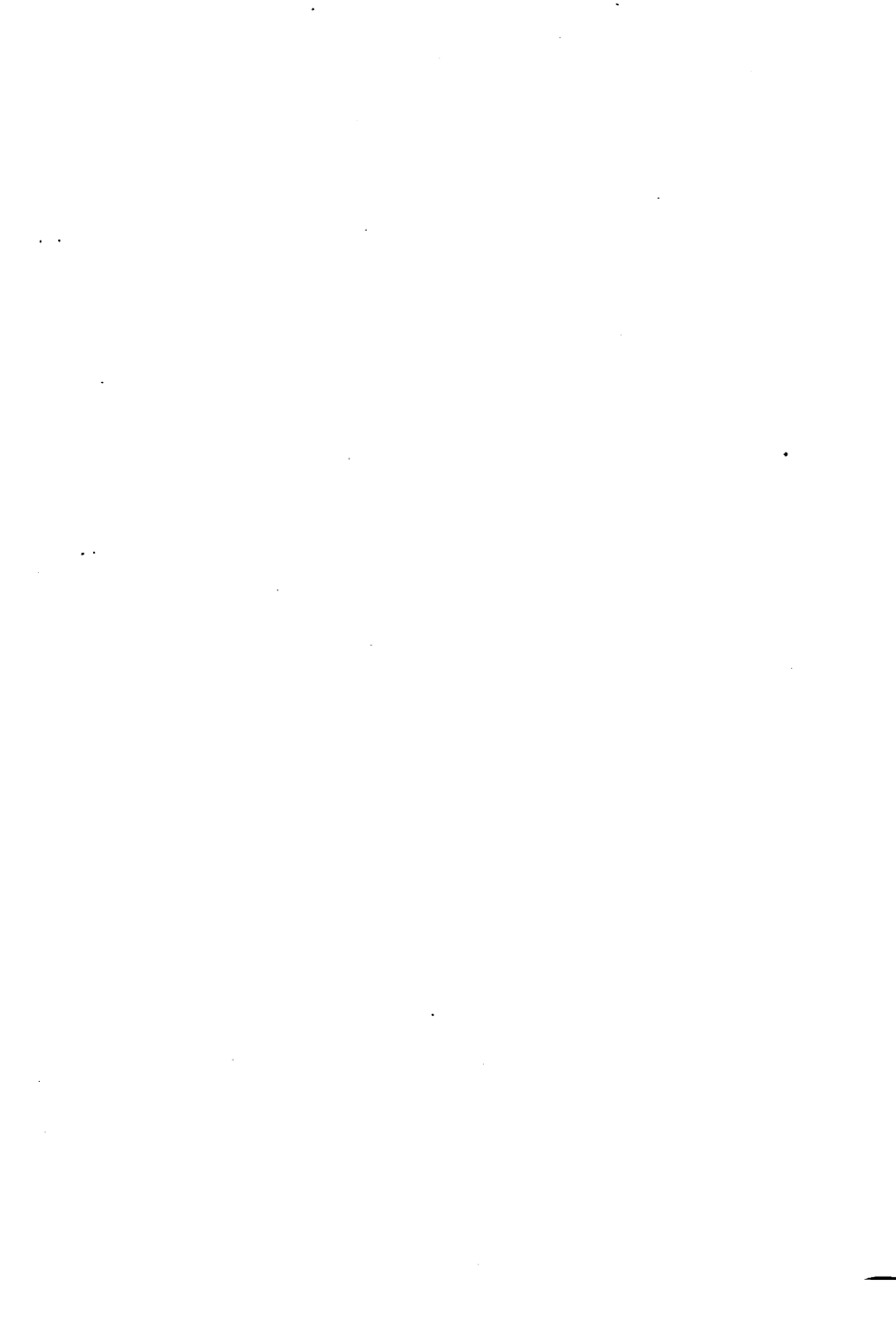
How much better it would have been for all concerned if Mrs. Smith had taken his position in business, put him in a day nursery and hired nurses for the children.

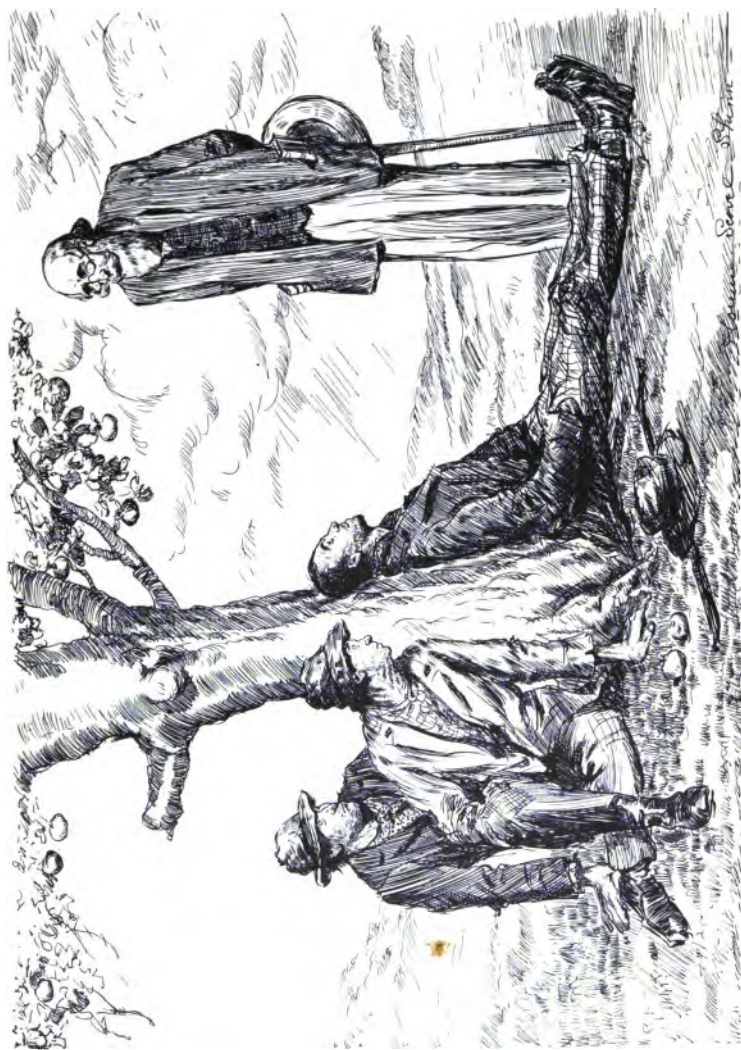
And yet “Mrs. Smith’s husband” is a nice sort of fellow. On the veranda of a summer hotel he can tell a good story, smoke a good cigar — if you give him one — and as long as you don’t take him a-fishing with you you will think him a decent sort of chap. But if he goes fishing with you, then the incompetence that has made him a non-success as master of the household crops out in all its strength, or weakness. He will tangle his line in every branch and bush he passes. When he catches an under-sized minnow — by an unlucky fluke — you must lay down the trout you have just landed in order to get his fish off the hook for him, and ten to one your fish — the biggest you ever pulled out of the water — will return to its congenial element in the interim. He loses more hooks and breaks more lines than you

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ever did in your life, and yet, when he reaches home with one pin-fish he is as proud as if he had filled his basket with the slipperiest mess of trout that ever lurked in the shadow of a rock.

"Mrs. Smith's husband" will be sincerely mourned when he steps out. The children will miss the pleasant fellow who told them stories, and when they were hurt sent them to their mother for witch hazel (because he couldn't remember where it was kept), and Mrs. Smith will say a dozen times a day, "How can I ever get along without your dear father?" when the wonder is how she ever accomplished anything with such a lovable old incompetent around.





"WHY ARE YOU NOT WORKING?"—P. 173.

The Bottle, the Half Brick and the Lump of Chalk

ONCE upon a time, three men, who, not to put too fine a point upon it, were in a fair way to become tramps, owing to lack of opportunity, coupled with a lack of ambition, met in their journeyings and continued together until they were approached by a philosopher who saw in them food for experiments.

It was noon of a hot summer's day and the three had halted under an apple tree which, in addition to its shade, offered the most inviting looking apples for the mere picking.

The philosopher greeted them and said: "Why are you not working?"

And the three replied as one man, "Because it is the noon hour."

Seeing through their reply, the philoso-

pher paused, smiled and helped himself to an apple. "The world is full of opportunities," he said, "for those who know enough to take them. You three men are likely to become tramps because your ambition is asleep. Now I am so fond of the picturesque that I am going to make a proposition to you which will not waste your time, as I see you have plenty of that, but which will bring to the most ingenious of your trio a substantial reward."

There was something that piqued curiosity in his manner and the stoutest of the three, who said his name was Jonas, asked him to unfold his scheme.

"Tell us what proposition our appearance has suggested to you?"

"First, what are your names?" asked the philosopher.

"I am Jonas, this thin one is Ralph and the tall one is Obadiah."

"You may call me Xerxes," said the philosopher, "for the same reason that I am to call you by the names you have given."

"Why is that?" asked Obadiah, who had a dull eye.

"Because it is not my real name. A few rods back I passed by a grass grown cellar-way whose house had been a ruin these hundred years. In the cellar was a heap of rubbish. I will go back and get from it three things which must constitute the instruments by which you are to earn some money."

As he spoke he went back to the cellar and the three talked about him in his absence.

"He is a lunatic," said Obadiah.

"He is a poet," said Ralph.

"No, he is a wise man," said Jonas, who did not care for poetry.

The philosopher now returned, bearing in his arms three half bricks, three lumps of chalk and three corked but empty bottles.

While the men wondered he gave to each a bottle, a lump of chalk and a half brick.

"Here are three things that are intrinsically almost worthless. In order to test your ingenuity I send you forth with them

and give you twenty-four hours in which to dispose of them to advantage. The one who gains the most I will reward in a fitting manner and I will pay you all for your time. Start at once, and to-morrow at this time meet me here and recount your adventures."

Obadiah was about to cast his material away, but Jonas said:

"Don't be foolish. If you get no more than payment for your time you will be better off than usual."

"For me it is a lark," said Ralph, blithely, "and I am eager to begin."

"That's a good mood in which to woo success," said the philosopher, and with that the three departed together.

After they had gone the philosopher took notes of their raiment and of their manner of speech for his forthcoming book, and then he hired lodging for the night at a neighbouring farmhouse and picked up nearly a chapter for his new book from the conversation of the hired man, who took for his

topic the conduct of the Boer War by the British. "The Intelligence of Hired Men" is the title that he gave to the chapter, but he did not know that the fellow was an undergraduate who was working his way through college by hiring out by the day.

The next day, a little before noon, the philosopher repaired to the apple tree and waited for the coming of the three.

The first to arrive was the tall one, Obadiah. He came with a downcast expression on his face and flung himself upon the grass.

"Hello," said the philosopher, "where are your companions?"

"That's more than I know, but as for me I do not want any more foolish adventures of this kind. I have walked many miles and I have nothing to show for it."

Now this was an absurd speech, for, being the next thing to a tramp, each day was filled with much walking and scant accomplishment.

As he was speaking Jonas appeared above

the crest of the hill and a minute later he joined the two with a hang-dog expression upon his face.

He had scarcely cast himself upon the ground when Ralph came over the hill on horseback and, vaulting lightly from the saddle, allowed his horse to crop the grass that was ripe for the second sickle. He wore a galliard air and was well pleased with the outcome of his adventure.

"Well, you are all on time, and before doing anything else let me pay you for your day's tramping," said the philosopher.

So saying, he gave each one an order on his publisher for a copy of his book, "The Wrongs of Labor."

Obadiah was manifestly displeased, but Jonas was beyond doubt glad to be acquainted with an author, and Ralph's smile of thanks was full of meaning.

"And now to the adventures. Obadiah came back first and he must tell what befell him," said the philosopher.

Obadiah cast away an apple into which he had sunk his teeth, and said :

“ I had no idea what to do with such unpromising materials, for the chalk had been used and was soiled into the bargain, the bottle was empty, and what earthly use is a broken brick? However, I walked along bearing them faithfully and in the middle of the afternoon I met a schoolboy on his way from school. ‘ Do you want to buy a piece of chalk?’ said I. ‘ Let’s see it,’ said he. So I showed it to him and he offered me a cent for it, which I accepted at once, as I knew that I would never have another such offer. It was not worth half that.”

“ That’s what it is to lack imagination,” said the philosopher.

“ A little further on I met a rag man and I asked him what he would give me for the bottle. ‘ It’s worth no more than a cent to me,’ said he, and for that sum I sold it.”

“ And what became of the brick?” asked the philosopher, compassionately.

"Why, I came across a farmer who was feeding his hens, and struck with a happy thought, I asked him if he had plenty of grit for them, and he told me he had not, so I offered him the half brick for what it was worth "

"And what did he think it worth? "

"A pullet's first egg, which, tho small, is worth eating. Here it is." Saying which Obadiah put his hand into his coat-tail pocket and drew it forth again, smeared with a broken egg.

"Did you not know," said the philosopher, "that a pullet's egg cannot withstand the weight of a man? Your assets then are two cents and a ruined egg. I fear that you have not earned the reward."

Obadiah pulled a sour face, and Jonas rose to a sitting posture and began his tale.

"I," said Jonas, "made up my mind that for making money quickly, deceit was necessary, so I went to a brook and there on a flat rock I ground both the brick and the chalk to

powder. Then I mixed them and put the mixture into the bottle, after which I filled it with water and shook it, and there I had an attractive looking liquid which I estimated to be worth one dollar the bottle."

The philosopher shook his head. "Obadiah lacked imagination, but yours was too active."

"At the first farmhouse at which I stopped I saw a feeble looking man at work chopping wood. I went up to him and said, 'Friend, you have rheumatism, and what would be exercise for me is work for you.' Then he asked me if I wanted to exercise, and I told him that walking was all the exercise I needed to give me a fine appetite, but I did want to recommend a medicine which, if used as a liniment, would break up his rheumatism. Just then the horn blew for dinner and he invited me in, and while I did justice to the simple fare he set before me I also sounded the praises of the liniment. 'Where can I buy it?' he asked at last, and

then I told him that I would part with my own bottle at just half price, or one dollar, as I had already used some. 'Rub yourself from head to foot with it,' said I, 'and you will find your rheumatism go. Keep it in a cool place or there will be no chalky deposit, which is a mark of its genuineness.' So I passed the bottle over to the simple old man and he paid me a dollar so quickly that when I took up my journey I wished that I had made my money more legitimately, but as it could do him no harm and as he had imagination I look to it to cure him for a time at least. So, whereas Obadiah made but two cents and a miniature egg, I have made a hundred cents, and here they are."

And he jingled the coins in his pockets.

"Yet you have not secured the reward," said the philosopher. "Imagination and deceit form a strong partnership, but I do not reward the results they bring about. Besides, your method lacked originality. What are patent medicines made of generally?"

Ofttimes of ingredients more harmful than chalk and brick dust. And now for Ralph's story."

Ralph ran his hands through his hair gracefully and said: "I have to admit at the start that I was handicapped, for, like Obadiah and his egg, I broke the bottle in my pocket before I had gone a half mile, and that left me only the half brick and the chalk. Still I journeyed along with a light heart, for the day was delightful and, after all, while the weather may be a poor topic of conversation, it has a great effect on one's spirits. I had gone about a mile from here when I was disturbed by the cry of 'Mad dog!' I read only last week a very able article by a Boston physician that proved there was no such thing as hydrophobia, but when I saw that dog coming straight at me with foaming jaws and gleaming, bloodshot eyes, I felt that it was a counterfeit of madness that merited escaping from, and I flung the half brick at him with such force that it

turned him in a new direction, and I leaped over a fence and pursued my way through the fields with nothing of my capital left but the piece of chalk."

Here Obadiah sniffed and Jonas looked as if he thought the prize might yet come to him in default of a more worthy man.

"In course of time I came to the city, and as the sky had clouded over I began to feel that life had its drawbacks after all and if something did not turn up soon I would come back penniless."

A shade passed over Ralph's expressive features as he looked at his companions for a sympathy that from two of them was not forthcoming. The philosopher, however, nodded gracefully, and Ralph said:

"As I walked along the crowded street that forms the main artery of the great city I came upon a furniture store, the owner of which had placed many of his most tempting bits of furniture upon the sidewalk. Among the sofas and chairs was a blackboard that,

however out of place it looked among the other kinds of furniture, provided my chalk with an inspiration, for instantly my fingers felt inspired to seize it, and with a glance at the name of the proprietor of the shop I stepped to the blackboard and wrote a triolet commending the wares within to the passers by. A prosperous and intellectual looking man came up to see what I was doing, and when he read my effusion he said, 'A modern Villon. Not bad, truly. On my word, your employer deserves to profit by your cleverness,' and he went into the store and bought an old fashioned bureau, paying a good round price for it on the spot. Not only that, but he commended me to the proprietor, saying (as I heard through the open door), that if Commerce called Poesy to her aid she did well to provide her with enough feet to enable her to stand properly before the world and that my verse was worthy of almost any anthology.

"It's a wonder you understood him," said Obadiah, with staring eyes.

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Ralph, disdaining the interruption, went, on: "In the meantime others had read the verse and were impelled by its great merit to go within, so that the dealer did a Christmas trade all that afternoon. He found time, however, to invite me to come in, and bade his wife set food and drink before me, and then he proposed that I write four verses more and he would pay me fifty dollars for the five, 'For,' said he, 'I have sold so much old fashioned furniture, thanks to your inspiring verses, that I have got to order more from the factory this evening.' And I, spurred by the talk of so much money, wrote with my chalk, on the spot, four verses that he vowed were even better than the first. Then he gave me ten half eagles and housed me for the night."

"You have gained the reward," said the philosopher, rapturously.

"I suppose so," said Ralph, with no affectation of modesty, "but I am not the one to wait for better times when my purse has a

tolerable lining. I believe in bettering the times myself, so this morning, after bidding him farewell and giving him what was left of the piece of chalk that he might in future write his own verses, I hired a horse for five dollars so as to come to you without fatigue, and here I am —— ”

“ Hold,” said Jonas, enviously, “ if you spent so much we have only your word that you got so much.”

“ Friend,” said Ralph, taking out nine glistening half eagles, “ are not forty-five dollars more than either one dollar, or yet two cents and an egg that is fractured? ”

Then the philosopher once more said, “ The reward is yours.”

“ And what is the reward? ” asked Ralph, suspiciously.

“ I make you my amanuensis —— ”

“ Come,” said Ralph to Jonas and Obadiah, “ let us resume our journey.”

For Divers Reasons

I SAILED from England last summer on the Mid-Ocean Line. I shall call the steamer the Bathtubbe. The fare to New York was sixty dollars for an inside berth in an inside room and that was the kind of room that I selected.

The passengers were sociable, amiable and interesting, and I formed many agreeable "ocean friendships." But all seemed lacking in one quality.

For instance, I approached a sporty-looking man with a red necktie and a diamond in his shirt-bosom. He was leaning over the rail, gazing at the last bit of green that we should see for eleven days.

I began a conversation with that confidence that he would reply pleasantly which strangers on a steamer always have — nor is that confidence ever abused.

"Easy motion, isn't it? You come over on this line?"

"No. I came over on the Fürst Bismarck, but I had a touch of the gout in Paris and the doctor recommended a slow ocean voyage, and so I chose this line. It's the slowest ever."

I was too polite to wink at him and he immediately turned the conversation into other channels.

Later in the day I met a lady from Boston. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that I was introduced to this lady; also to every Bostonian on board.

"Easy motion, isn't it?" said I, as I drew my chair into the shadow of one of the boats.

"Yes," said the Boston lady; "the motion is easy, as you say, but I prefer a faster boat myself. We were coming home on the St. Louis, but Mr. Adams was cabled to come home at once and this was the only line that we could secure passage on at such short notice."

"You were very lucky," said I, mentally figuring that if they had taken the St. Louis they would have reached home two days sooner than the Bathtubbe would dock it.

"Well, I don't know as we can call it lucky; the table is so inferior — at least to Back Bay cooking."

I think it was on the same day that I fell into conversation with a well-put-up young man of New York. I fell into it in my usual way by saying:

"Nice, easy motion, isn't it?" We were standing in the bow watching a school of porpoises out for their noon recess.

"You may call it easy but I call it blamed hard. Ten days more of it. I don't see why I was foolish enough to give up my passage on the Oceanic, but a chap in London told me that if I wanted an absolutely novel experience I'd better take one of these tubs."

"Yes," said I, "and they have the advantage of being cheap. Table not so bad, either."

"Well, the cheapness didn't appeal to me. In fact, I tried to get a whole stateroom for \$240 so that I'd have plenty of room to myself, don't you know, but the confounded boat was so crowded that I could only get an inside berth, lower one at that. If I hadn't foolishly cabled my return home to the governor, I'd have waited and taken a Cunarder."

I met a Southern woman that same day in the ladies' saloon. We were both writing letters and neither one of us could think of a thing to say, so I looked up and smiled and uttered my formula :

"Easy motion, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes; I wish it would roll a little. It is so monotonous. They say the sister steamer, the Washtubbe, is much more of a roller."

"Fine line, though, isn't it?"

"Do you think so? I've always been accustomed to take the White Star Line, but my husband's brother's cousin, whom we

met at Bingen, told us if we wanted to be perfectly comfortable we'd better take a Mid-Ocean Liner."

"Cheaper, too," said I, wickedly.

She coloured and went on. "I really don't know about that part of it. My husband always attends to the buying of tickets."

I had heard that there was a stowaway, who had been discovered the third day out. I went to him. He was peeling potatoes in a dismal room off the kitchen.

"Hello, my boy," said I; "that's right. I see you're helpful. I used to do that for my mother when I was a boy. Easy motion, isn't it? Did you expect to come by this line?"

He was flattered at not being taken for one of the crew.

"No, I wanted to take the Bremen, but she was burned at Hoboken, so I came on this. It's kinder fun to peel potatoes. The skins slip off so easy."

With a sad heart I left this insincere young man peeling potatoes and went up on the upper deck. There I saw a dignified and a handsome old gentleman, the best-dressed man on board, reading Aristophanes in the original. He had spoken to no one and people thought him offish. I wondered what tale he would give me, and I stopped alongside of him, and when he looked up I said:

“Easy motion, isn’t it?”

“Yes, luckily for me it is. I’m a poor sailor. But easy or not easy I had to come by this line, as I practically went broke in London, and just had enough to buy a passage by this cheap line. I’ll have to touch the friends who come to meet me for the money to tip the stewards. I don’t rave over the table, and I know lots of ways in which the service could be improved, but I’m practically broke and that’s why I’m here, so I don’t complain.” Here he cast a comprehensive glance at such of the passengers as

were in sight. "Yes, I'm broke, and I fancy we're all in the same boat."

"Shake," said I.

Miss Flutterly on What is Doing

I WAS waiting for a cross town car at Fifth avenue and Thirty-fourth street, that point where the fashionables and the mercantiles weave endless mats as they cross and recross and wind in and out. Above me towered the Waldorf, that meeting place of the disgustingly rich, which some one (was it not Herford?) said was designed to furnish exclusiveness to the masses. When I saw a vision of loveliness coming down the street I lingered in its shade, and forgot that I wished to take a car, for the vision was no other than pretty Miss Flutterly, whom I first met on an ocean steamer and whose face has a way of popping into my consciousness about once in so often. She was just as swagger as ever and her voice — when I heard it — had still the soft southern

quality that with her is cultivated — for she was born in New Bedford.

I am sure she will pardon me if I report our conversation, because it touched on so many very much alive topics, and it was so characteristic of us both.

“Why, how do you do?” said she, giving me her hand with an impulsiveness that had no society chill in it. Little Miss Flutterly is very genuine and that’s why I like her.

“I’m awfully glad to see you again,” she went on. “Why, I haven’t seen you since we had such pleasant talks on the dear old steamer coming back from Europe. Have you been over since? No? — neither have I, but every spring it seems as if I’d just have to, don’t you know. Do you have that feeling? I suppose it’s because so many of our ancestors, hundreds of years back, were Europeans. I’ve had eight ancestors in this country and each one was just a little nearer being an Englishman until the eighth, and he *was* an Englishman and so I suppose

that's why I want to go to the continent again — and Africa. Ever since the Boer War I have felt that I must see Africa and find out if the Dutch down there look like the Dutch in Holland. Did you know that the Dutch don't like to be called Dutchmen? No; they say they're Hollanders. And the Germans hate to be called Dutch. I don't really suppose anybody in the wide world likes to be called Dutch, because we use the word to denote bad taste in dressing and colors. Oh, I'll never forget my trip to Holland. I couldn't help thinking of it this summer because we went up to the White Mountains, and you know there aren't any mountains in Holland at all. Every time I looked at Mount Washington and the rest of them, I used to think what would they do with it in those flat little meadows full of cows and windmills. I suppose that's one reason why Holland is so small — because she's so flat. Now New Hampshire isn't such a big State, but it's so up-and-down-

hilly that there's lots more room in it. I should think that that would have occurred to the Dutch — I mean the Hollanders — and they would have built up hills so as to have more room. You know at Waterloo, wasn't it Waterloo where Napoleon was killed — no, Wellington — well, anyhow I know it was Waterloo where they had an enormous hill that seven hundred women made out of just earth and wheelbarrows. Now if women could do it once it could be done by men, and if the Dutch would do it it would increase their country and make it less liable to be flooded. Isn't it awful the floods we're having nowadays? Papa says it's because they cut down so many trees. I suppose trees stop the springs from coming too fast by absorbing their moisture, and when they cut down whole forests why there's nothing to do but let the floods come. But it's awful for the people that get washed away. Papa was reading the other day about some Russian immigrants that had

just settled on the banks of a river out west when the floods came and they were carried into Kansas and they had no means of telling what State they had come from. One of the youngest had been born there and he will never know what State he is a native of because those Russians are so ignorant. Doesn't it seem awful our allowing so many ignorant people to come to this beautiful country? I think they ought to have put a stop to it just as soon as we were declared independent. Because we're not really Americans now, except the negroes, and they're Africans. But I do think they ought to let the Chinese in, because our soldiers treated the Chinese so nicely during those Boxer troubles, and it must have raised hopes that we'd let them in, and then we don't any more than we did, and yet we go to China and they don't say a word. I suppose their knowledge of English is very elementary, being heathens, so they're not much on conversation. Don't you think conversa-

tion awfully pleasant? Mamma says it's the breath of life to me. I really think that it's one of the most delightful things a person can do. Now there isn't any one in the wide world, no matter how wise he is, can guess what's going on in my mind until I speak, and so if I didn't say a word — I suppose I'd keep them guessing — but that's slang, and I'm trying not to use slang. Mamma says that the excessive use of slang indicates a vacant mind. I used to be awfully slangy, but that brought me up with a round turn.

“Isn't this an age of marvels? I really don't know what will be discovered next — do you? Really, it would take a strictly scientific person to tell, because just as you think it's going to be airships it turns out to be radium or something else just as wonderful.

“Papa says it was a woman invented radium, and it seems as if the manufacture of it ought to be stopped, because if a single

pound of it was — what is it they do with it, turn it on or explode it, or what? — well, any way, if a single pound of it did what it does do, whatever that is, it would annihilate the world. Just think of the danger of having even a little of it. They say it's diminishing at the rate of a certain number of grains a second, and it's going so fast it would reach the sun inside of a minute, and yet, after watching a heap of it for I don't know how many thousands of years, it doesn't look any smaller — so I don't see how we're going to get rid of it now it's here. And they say it will make anything shine, except imitation diamonds. I should think that people wouldn't dare wear paste after this, because if they suddenly stopped shining it would be so mortifying, and then there's the danger of burning, for they say that a single grain of it, if spread out in the right way, would furnish enough heat to heat all the office buildings in New York below Twenty-third street — or maybe it was

Fourteenth street. Perhaps they could dissolve it in water and then run pipes, like steam pipes. I know papa said that the person who could solve the problem of how to do without coal wouldn't need to do without it — he'd be so rich that he could buy it at any price. Doesn't it seem unfair? The very man who could afford to do without it would be the man who had it to burn.

"And then there's wireless telegraphy. Brother Tom says that the manufacturers of wire went to Marconi and offered him, I think it was, ten thousand dollars or else a hundred thousand if he would stop inventing wireless telegraphy, because it would ruin them, and Tom said that Marconi was such a scientist that he said no money could stop him as he was sure that he'd make a fortune out of his invention. And all those wire people will be ruined.

"Well, I must really be running on" (just as if she hadn't been). "Do come and call on mamma and me. We'd love to hear you talk about what you've done."

So I left her pretty face and, feeling as if I had just absorbed a whole Sunday supplement, I boarded the tenth car that had passed me.

Miss Flutterly on Politics and the Drama

I SEEM to be always meeting little Miss Flutterly and having conversations with her. The other day I clambered up to the top of a Fifth Avenue stage, in emulation of the example of the late Walt Whitman, and I was no sooner seated than a sweet voice came to me from the seat behind:—

“I’m so glad to be kept in countenance by you. I never rode this way before. Isn’t it fun?”

I looked behind me, instinctively raising my hat as I did so, and there sat Miss Flutterly, all by herself and looking prettier than ever in a — well, it was in very good taste and I presume it had been made by a tailor, but I cannot describe it. That’s why I was never able to write fashion letters.

I climbed to the seat beside her, and as

I sat down her eye caught a headline in the newspaper of a man beside the driver.

"WILL ROOSEVELT BUST THE TRUSTS?" said she, half to herself, and then in a louder tone, "I do hope he will. I haven't anything against the Trusts personally, although I do think they must be horrid things judging from the cartoons I see — over people's shoulders, you know. I never buy those papers myself. But really, I admire his courage in trying to demolish anything so big and horrid. Brother Tom says that he's sure he will either be renominated or else he won't and all on account of his fighting the Trusts. Now some men wouldn't dare fight the Trusts on account of the politicians. You see a great many of the Trusts are Democrats and they don't like the way Roosevelt is interfering with them, and brother Tom says that Roosevelt doesn't stand a ghost of a chance of being nominated by the Democrats. I think it would be an awful pity if he wasn't elected again because

it is so interesting to read what his children are doing.

“He isn’t a bit handsome, but I think he would have made a splendid actor, because he’s always doing something that makes people admire him, and his being a cowboy that way during the Spanish War — although a gentleman born — I think it was just splendid.

“Pa says people like him in spite of his grand stand play, but I think that’s the best part of him. Now some presidents don’t look or act the part at all. I saw Loubet when we were in Paris and he didn’t look the least bit wicked: the way you’d expect a French president to look. He didn’t have a fierce moustache and they say he never does anything dashing. I believe in a man’s doing what he’s paid for, and the French are so dashing and unconventional that I should think they’d just hate to think that they had a man there who looks so like a kind pussy cat.

"Speaking of cats, don't you love them? I perfectly adore them, myself. The first thing I say when I'm thinking of making friends with a man or a woman is: 'Do you like cats?' and if they don't I never go a bit out of my way to be pleasant. Tom says that I'm just like Shakespeare in that. He says that Shakespeare said that a man who did not have the love of cats in his soul was fit for treason, stratagems and spoils. Those are the very words.

"Do you remember the cats they had in Paris, those lovely Angoras? And I will say that the French are very kind to their cats. They are awfully cruel to their horses, but cats and little dogs they adore, and I think that that shows they have some good qualities.

"Don't you hate to come across a person without any good qualities? Imagine waking up in the night and realizing that you hadn't any good qualities at all. It must be awful,

"*Did* you see that picture of Hanna in that man's paper. I don't suppose he *can* look like that all the time. I tell Pa that if I was a politician I'd be sure to have all my features straightened before I ran for office, because the cartoonists do notice anything the least bit queer in the hang of a lip or the tilt or bend of a nose. Tom says he heard of a politician who liked the cartoons of himself better than he liked his own looks, and so he tried to look like them and his wife was so mortified that she got a divorce.

"Isn't it queer how shocked some people are if you talk about divorce. Mamma says that when she was a girl it wasn't considered respectable to even mention the word, much less to be divorced, and if people *had* to be they sank right out of society. I think people are much broader now. Mind you, I don't think it's nice and I don't know any people who have ever done more than thought of getting one, but it doesn't seem

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half as bad as heavy drinking, because you can be divorced and nobody would know it at all, but if you drink heavily it's sure to show.

“Speaking of drinking reminds me of the perfectly delicious soda water I had the other day at the French place on Fifth Avenue — I'm perfectly terrible about names. It was called orange flower and it tasted just like Mendelssohn's Wedding March — don't you know what I mean? I told Pa that when I got married I'd have the guests drink libations — wasn't that what the old Romans used to do — in this soda water. Now there's something the Romans never had. Just fancy Cæsar ordering a vanilla ice cream soda with a straw and a spoon! Wouldn't it be weird? I wonder what it would be in Latin. I don't suppose I ever will know, for Latin is something I never could grasp. I fell panting by the wayside at the end of the first book of Cæsar and Pa said it would be cruel to have me go on.

How in the world Cæsar, with all the other things he had to do, could write a book in such horribly beautiful and difficult Latin I don't see. I was so glad that when Richard Mansfield gave 'Julius Cæsar' last season he did it in English. Wasn't he perfectly beautiful as *Brutus*, when he saw those ghosts in the last act? It must have been awfully depressing—almost as bad as Ibsen's *Ghosts*. I saw that and I was depressed for as much as a half hour afterward. I simply adore Ibsen. I know it's unusual, but it seems so intellectual, and I adore intellectuality. I saw his *Hedda Gabler* and I couldn't help wondering why he gives his characters such outlandish names. *Hedda Gabler!* But she did talk a good deal. Mrs. Fiske, you know. I went to see her one afternoon and then I went to see 'Babes in Toyland,' and it was just as different. I don't think Ibsen's plays are a bit American, but 'Babes in Toyland' is.

"Mamma's awfully funny about the

stage. She's always afraid of being shocked ever since we went to see 'Du Barry' — or that red-headed woman. Of course there are lots of things you hear an actor say on the stage that you wouldn't think of letting a gentleman say in your parlour, no matter how well behaved he was, but I think that that's what makes up the fascination of the stage — you never quite know what's coming next. When I go with Mamma we always have seats near the door so that she can slip out when she's shocked, and I don't like it a bit, for she is so old-fashioned that she hardly ever stays through the first act and it seems a wicked waste of money. It's an awful waste, anyhow, the prices they charge for a good seat, and half the time it's to see some book acted that you've had out of the library, so you know how it's going to end.

"Mamma did sit out one play; that was Sothern — I mean in 'Hamlet.' She said he couldn't hold a candle to Booth, but of

course that's what all elderly people say about actors that are dead. I thought he was perfectly fine, so *spirituelle*, and the way he kills *Polonius* through a portiere is thrilling. I don't see how he knows where to stab. It seems wonderful that Shakespeare was able to write a part that Sothern could play, for you always associate Shakespeare with all those old English literary people you read of at school.

"And wasn't Cecilia Loftus' *Ophelia* sad? And those shrieks when she's going mad. It was exactly as if she was imitating something.

"A friend of mine saw her buying candy in Huyler's at just the very time Sothern was killing *Laertes*. When I heard it at first I was just sick. I'd thought of her in the damp, cold earth — and to have her buying candy.

"How *do* you get off these dreadful things? Oh, thanks, awfully."



"WASN'T CECILIA LOFTUS' OPHELIA SAD?"—P. 212.

My Golf

I AM naturally very nervous. All my friends say that I lack repose, that I am too strenuous. "Take up golf, old man," said one. "It is what you need. It will keep you out in the open, it will teach you the value of deliberation, and it will cure your nervousness, and give you a repose of manner that you can get in no other way."

I am spending the summer in the country, and although there is no course near us, the country-side is full of natural advantages for the pursuit of the game, and I determined to take it up.

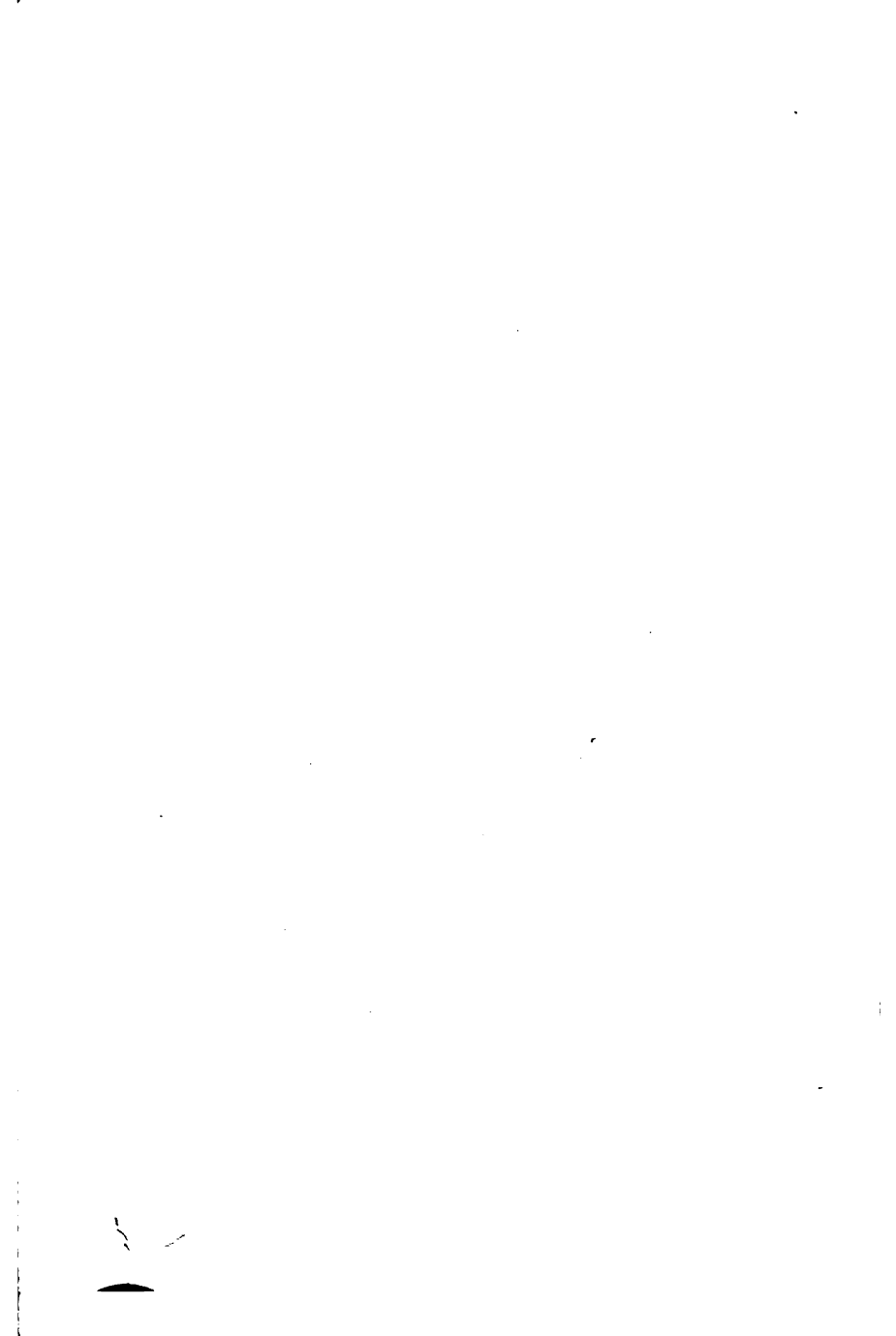
I did not care to go to the expense of a whole outfit, as I might not like the game after I had learned it, but the next time I went down to New York I bought a driver, thinking to practise repose with it.

I bought a particularly stout one that cost me five dollars, as I figured that if I put a little more into the purchase price I'd gain in the end. But now I'm sorry that I did not buy a very cheap one, because then, when I had tripped up the old gentleman in the Fourth Avenue car on my way to the Grand Central, it would have broken the club, and that would have ended my golf. But the stick was stout, and the old gentleman fell and broke his leg instead, and also dropped a bottle of wine that he was taking home, having just received it from a returning sea-captain.

He told me that he did not mind the break in his leg, because he had broken it before in the same place, and he knew just how long it would take to mend it, and he needed a rest from business cares, anyway, which he never would have taken if he had not been forced to it in some such way; but he was all broken up over the spilt wine, as it was a very rare vintage, and he never expected to receive any more.



"HE WAS AN OLD GOLFER HIMSELF."—P. 215.



I apologised all I could and offered to put him up at any hospital he might select, but he wouldn't hear of it, and as the wine was priceless, there was nothing left for me to do except to feel miserable and show it plainly, which I did.

He was an old golfer himself, and after I had helped him out of the car (and lost my train by so doing) he showed me the proper way to hold my stick so that I shouldn't trip up anybody else. The pleasantest part of my golf experience was while we were waiting for an ambulance — for I had telephoned for one at my own expense. We sat on the curbstone, and he wouldn't hear of my accompanying him; said he believed in the rigour of the game, like Sarah Battle, and he ought to have seen that I was a beginner and kept out of the way of my club.

He was so entertaining that I was really sorry when the ambulance came and he rolled off toward his home.

As for me, I had missed the last train for

the day, so there was nothing to do but to put up overnight at a hotel, and that with dinner and breakfast cost me four dollars more. So far, the game had come to nine dollars, and I had yet to make my first inning.

I will hastily pass over the broken car window on the way up in the train next morning. I might have pushed an umbrella or a cane through it, and I contend that it was not because it was a golf-stick, but because I lacked repose, that I did break the glass. Of course I had to settle with the conductor, but I think that three dollars was too much to charge me for the glass. The car was ventilated after I had opened the window in this artificial way, and thousands rose up and called me blessed in different parts of the car, for, needless to say, the car was warm and the other windows were too tightly wedged to open, even with super-human efforts. I should like to recommend to the Consolidated Company a judicious

use of golf-sticks on their windows; then there would not be so much smothered profanity on the part of men, and overstrained muscles on the part of women who foolishly attempt the impossible.

I hold that the London way is preferable to ours. There you know that the bus windows cannot be opened, that they were manufactured shut; but in this country you know that a car window may be opened in a perfectly normal way under proper conditions. The fact that the conditions never are proper, coupled with the knowledge that the windows were meant to open, is what makes travel in summer in America so absolutely unendurable.

But I digress.

I was unable to do any golfing after I had reached my abiding-place in the country, as I found in the mail an order for a Christmas story, and as it was July the affair cried haste and kept me busy all day. But next morning I awoke early, aware that the golf

fever had seized me, and I was up before any one else in the house, as every one else knew, for my lack of repose caused me to express my exuberance of spirits in merry roundelays — that is, they were merry to me, but disastrous to the dozers.

My youngest son soon joined me, and was delighted at my request that he act as my caddy. He prepared my tee—I had had coffee in bed: I never take exercise with stomach empty.

I adjusted the ball, gazed earnestly at the object I desired to approximate, swung my club in the air, made several false starts in the most approved fashion, and then I let drive.

My next-door neighbour, a wealthy gentleman from New York, was awakened by the crash of glass, and came running downstairs in his pajamas. I tried to cultivate repose as I reflected that I had disturbed his, and while cultivating it I went over to see just what damage I had inflicted. I had

put quite a curve on the ball, for it was fifty feet to the left of its intended destination.

I walked over and gazed at the ten-dollar opening I had made in his plate-glass window. My son was overjoyed both at the crash and at the jagged opening. That is youth. *I* felt no joy.

My neighbour was not gazing at the opening I had effected, but at a little faience vase which had tried in its ineffectual way to stop the rapid progress of the ball.

Even as the old gentleman of two days before had overlooked the damage to his leg, but had grieved at the spilt wine, so my friend could have overlooked the broken glass, but the vase was an heirloom and virtually priceless.

Here let me stop long enough to ask why it is that people will load up their summer houses with priceless treasures. I never yet bought anything that was priceless; in fact, I always insist on having the price plainly marked. And when people give me price-

less things I do not put them in my summer house. I go even further than that. The place where I spend my winters I regard simply as a house of detention until I can return to my summer place, so I never load it up with priceless treasures; therefore at no season of the year could such an accident have befallen me as I had caused to fall upon my neighbour.

He would not hear of my buying him another vase,— he is a little deaf,— and I was glad he would not, nor did I raise my voice. My golfing had cost me enough already, and when I buy faience I want it for myself.

But he was somewhat sarcastic at my expense, and that I did not like. I like sarcasm to be prepaid, although I like to do the shipping myself. He said that I was not cut out for an athlete, and that at my time of life if I did want to take up games of skill I'd better go out to the Bad Lands, that couldn't be damaged, or to the Desert of Sahara. Altogether he made me feel very

sorry that I had not bought a putter instead of a driver. Putting is wholly innocuous and innocent. Those who made a name for themselves in the late sixties at croquet, as I did, should be able to putt with ease, while driving of all kinds is and always has been dangerous and difficult.

Still, there is too much of the sportsman in my make-up to allow me to submit tamely to setbacks. It was now breakfast-time, and I had had a little ten-dollar practice,— for of course I insisted on paying for the pane I had caused to be broken,— and, like Dewey at Manila, I felt that breakfast was necessary; but afterward I would go on with the fight and master driving.

The morning mail brought me an order for a hundred-dollar story that an editor wanted written while he waited in his office; that is to say, he wanted it within twenty-four hours.

I generally pay immediate heed to such orders, because I think that editors who take

the trouble to order things in this world, where so much is forced upon the unwilling, ought to be encouraged; but the golfing fever was on me, and after breakfast, instead of going into my workroom, I secured my son once more and sallied forth to try a little more driving.

This time I went farther from the haunts of men, and took up my station in a very wild field full of shrubs and weeds, and, as I supposed, containing nothing valuable—certainly no vases or rare wines.

I have heard people say that they found it hard to hit the ball squarely; that they generally dug up earth, or chipped slices of gutta-percha from the cross-hatched sphere, or fanned the circumambient air. But my troubles were of a different nature. I hit the ball every time I strove to, and the first time I hit it in that field I seemed to conceal it in a lusty whortleberry-bush some fifty feet distant.

My son and I consumed nearly the whole

of a pleasant morning looking for that ball. We visited every bush and shrub that was big enough to harbour a ball, but we could not find it, and at last, after several hours' search, I reluctantly gave up and sent my boy home after another one. While he was gone I threw myself down upon the grass to rest, and I found the ball, or, to speak more accurately, my hip found it. And it wasn't ten feet from the place where I had stood when driving. I can account for this in only one way. When people lose their way in the great woods they circle round and round, and at last bring up where they started from. I dare say that lost balls do the same, and that this one was on its way back when I found it.

While yet my son was gone, I placed the new-found ball on a little tee of my own making, and with a strength born of long waiting I whirled my club through the soft July air and smote the ball.

Will somebody tell me why farmers in

New England should raise Angora goats, and if so, why they select wild and scrubby pastures to raise them? I am told that it is a profitable industry, and that in a few years, instead of the cattle upon a thousand hills, it will be the thousand Angoras on a single hill, so prolific and so useful are they. But they are inimical to golf, and hard as their heads are, they are not so hard as a ball driven by a strong man with a five-dollar club.

There were little kids in that field not worth more than twenty-five dollars apiece, and they went scot-free after my terrible drive. They bleated and leaped and cropped the rank herbage, all unaware of the fact that the father of the herd, imported from Turkey, had been laid low by a golf-ball. My son saw him drop, and my son found the ball on the ground in front of him.

I did not know that he was highly valuable, but small boys have a way of picking up information, and my son told me that Mr.

POP POP

"MY SON SAW HIM DROP."—P. 224.



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Hermance, a gentleman farmer and a neighbour of mine, who had just gone into the industry, had paid one thousand dollars for this miserable animal that was now worth no more than its wool and its hide and its carcass would bring. It did not interest me to recall, as I did immediately, that I had read in an afternoon paper that Angora leather made the best golf-bags in the market. I did not care to buy a golf-bag just then.

I decide quickly. I took the next train for New York and proceeded to get insured for one thousand dollars in favor of Mr. Hermance. Then I registered an oath to play no outdoor games more dangerous than puss-in-the-corner.

Then I returned to my summer home to write the story that the editor was waiting for so patiently, and nothing better coming into my head, I wrote up my experiences at golf under the foregoing title. While they were not written by an expert golfer, they

should hold much of interest to the average beginner, and if the reading of them shall save to the world a few pieces of faience, a few rare vintages, a few legs, and a few Angora rams and other cattle, I shall not have written in vain.

At Mrs. Bidwell's Tea

I HAVE always been one of those who decried as childish the tendency of the average man to laugh at the slap-stick style of humour so prevalent on the variety stage and in the pages of the comic weeklies.

I have said that it was not the highest form of wit to "swat" a man in the face with a bag of flour, or to cause him to slide down a flight of steps when in the act of making a dignified bow of departure, and I find that when such things as those I have described happen in real life those of us who are sympathetic do not laugh.

Why, take the series of most wildly improbable and farcical things that actually happened at Mrs. Bidwell's tea the other afternoon, and which were anything but laughable to me.

I am Mr. Bidwell and — yes, you have

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guessed it — Mrs. Bidwell is the partner of my joys and sorrows, and we divided a plenty of the latter last Thursday.

We have lived in Brantford, New Jersey, for three years, and during that time Mrs. Bidwell has repeatedly said that she ought to give a tea and invite her New York friends, for she is always going to “cobweb parties” and private concerts and exhibitions of pictures at their various apartments and studios, while we have never made any return for these civilities.

I was pretty certain that few of our friends in New York would care to venture out as far into the suburbs as Brantford, because the comic papers have drawn such pictures of the sections outlying New York that many people to the city born think New Jersey and Long Island perfectly impossible places, and then a trip there, in the fall or winter, is not one to be lightly undertaken.

However, Mrs. Bidwell dispatched about a hundred invitations, and while she was writing the notes she said to me:

"Thursday week is the seventeenth, isn't it?" and I, immersed in my morning paper, said, without thinking:

"Yes."

But it wasn't. Thursday week was the twenty-fourth.

However, the invitations all went out setting apart the seventeenth as the day for the tea, while all the time Mrs. Bidwell intended having it a week later.

I was surprised at the number who accepted. There were upward of thirty-five. As trains do not run frequently on the D. P. & J. road, Mrs. Bidwell advised all to take the one arriving at Brantford at three-five, and most of them said they would take it.

This much of explanation has been necessary. After this it is to be hoped that the action will be more rapid, although anything but pleasant.

Mrs. Bidwell is an absent-minded sort of body, and the morning of the seventeenth dawned without her once thinking that this

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was the day she had set for her tea. She still thought that the festivities were yet a week off, and, of course, had not begun to make any preparations whatever for it, beyond stripping the paper from the parlour walls, because we intended celebrating the event with new paper and a new ceiling, several pieces of fallen plaster having given us warning that the old ceiling was tired of maintaining its position.

As for me, I never interfere with my wife's doings, and I gave no thought to the tea. I intended to be present at it, and I considered *that* an act of devotion, as anything more wishy-washy than a tea or even tea itself I cannot imagine. An afternoon "beer" would have some tone, but a tea —

At two o'clock of the day Miss Haskell, one of our near neighbours, and a very pretty girl, came to the house. I was home with a clinging cold, and I was also helping my wife make ready for the plasterers, so I

went to the door. Miss Haskell was dressed in a beauty pink silk, with roses in her hair, and a "kissmequick" over her head and shoulders, and she looked like an orchid for delicacy. Much astonished, I said:

"How de do? I hardly feel like asking any one of such magnificence in, because the house is upside down, and Eleanor looks like a fright with her dusting cap on. She's on the rampage."

But Miss Haskell came right in, laughing gaily and saying.

"Well, as I am going to help pour tea, I guess she expects me. And she hasn't much time. They'll be here in half an hour."

"They? Who?" said I, thoroughly bewildered, as I helped Miss Haskell over a pail of water and a fallen stepladder that blocked the way to the parlour.

"Why, the guests. Mercy on us! What *have* you been doing?"

She had seen the wreck of the parlour.

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Shreds of paper here and there, nothing on the mantel, a stack of pictures standing in the corner, a sheet over the piano, and no other furniture in the room.

"Do you mean to say that any one is coming to this house to-day?" asked I in consternation at the thought.

"Why, this is the day for your wife's tea, and the guests will be here on the three-five."

Just then Mrs. Bidwell came up from the cellar, where she had been burning some of the wall paper in the furnace and having a beautiful time. She was a sight. She is my wife, but I repeat it, she was a sight. A dusting cap on her head very much awry, a pair of unbecoming spectacles which she always wears when she is housecleaning, for nobody knows *what* hygienic reason, a smudge of ashes on her cheekbone; she did not look much like a divinity who was soon to preside over a Russian samovar and say with a bewitching smile: "Which shall it be — cream or lemons?"

She advanced, and, smudge and all, kissed Miss Haskell affectionately, and never noticed that her lovely neighbour was dressed in her best. Mrs. Bidwell is one of the most absent-minded women I ever knew.

"Eleanor, do you intend having a tea to-day?" I said.

"No, dear." And then, with a realizing smile: "What an absurd question. Does this look like a tea house? It's next week."

"That's what I thought," said I, in relieved tones. "Miss Haskell was trying to frighten me with the statement that guests were coming to this wreck of a house to-day."

"And they are," said Miss Haskell, stoutly, her colour rising. "Eleanor Bidwell, this is the seventeenth, and you told me that the tea was to be on the seventeenth. I've come in to pour."

Mrs. Bidwell ran out into the hall and consulted a calendar. Then she gave a little hysterical shriek.

"Edward, it *is*! They *are*! What *shall* I do? Not a thing in the house."

"I think there's a great deal in the house," said I, surveying the chaos that surrounded me. "It might be exposed to better advantage, but it's all here."

"Oh, don't joke," said Mrs. Bidwell, wringing her hands. "What shall we do? We haven't time to do more than make tea."

"Well, that's what they're coming for," said I, consolingly. "Coming thirty miles for a small cup of tea and a lady-finger."

"But there aren't any lady-fingers, and there's no time to go to Passaic, and how will they get here? I haven't said a word to the hackman, and he has only that ramshackle depot hack."

"They'll have to walk. It won't kill 'em to walk half a mile. The ground is hard to-day. And that will give you time to get something on that is a little less like a scarecrow."

I regret to say that Mrs. Bidwell is never

able to cope with unusual conditions. I am the executive of the family in all emergencies, and I now sent Eleanor out to the kitchen to tell the cook to make tea in the wash-boiler, as we were expecting a houseful of people on the three-five. Then I sent her upstairs to put on her handsome habiliments, while Miss Haskell, donning the kitchen apron that my wife had discarded, helped me to move the furniture into something resembling order. We could not hang the pictures, as the nails had all been pulled out and the moulding ripped off. At best, our parlour was *en dé shabillé*.

Of course it was too late to turn back our guests. And the "tea" — or "reception" (if anything happened to the wash-boiler) — must be held in our house, as it was much too late to requisition the house of a neighbour.

Mrs. Bidwell may not have much executive ability, but she can dress like a hurricane, and by the time that Miss Haskell and I had put parlour, dining-room and hall

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(which is nothing more than a large room) into something like order, Eleanor came downstairs looking just as pretty as she did the day I married her, and that's saying a good deal.

"When Leonard comes home from school," said Miss Haskell, "you can send him over to our house for all the cake that mother made to-day. We can spare it just as well as not, and it's those iced sponge cakes that you like so."

Eleanor's gratitude was pathetic. She saw herself being miraculously dragged out of the pit which her absent-mindedness had digged for her, and felt that she was blessed beyond her deserts.

School is nearby, and Leonard came home before the whistle of the three-five announced the approach of the dread train with its bevy of unwelcome guests.

He was at once dispatched to the Hasskells' for the sponge cakes, and then I realised that I was in my dressing-gown and

slippers, and I was sent upstairs to don a frock coat.

The house still looked like Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," but most of our guests knew how absent-minded Eleanor is, and they would make allowances.

I was nearly dressed when I heard the creak of wheels and saw the depot hack coming toward the house.

For some months I have supposed that each day it would follow the example of the one hoss shay and drop to pieces, and its staying powers have been the wonder of all Brantford, but to-day its hours were numbered.

As I watched it begin to turn in at our driveway, I saw the most singular sight that I ever witnessed outside of the "Voyage en Suisse" of the Hanlons.

The bottom of it suddenly dropped out, and two well-turned but sturdy ankles encased in black gaiters and white stockings fell through to the ground, where the feet

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on the end of them, moved by an instinct of self-preservation, began to pad along the road in an effort to keep up with the hack, which the hare-brained driver had not sense enough to stop. Perhaps he did not know what had happened.

Now I swear to you that the spectacle did not strike me as funny, but, as showing the different ways in which different people view the same thing, I heard shrieks of laughter from Eleanor and Miss Haskell, who happened to be looking out of the parlour window.

I flung open the window and yelled :

“ Stop, you fool ! ”

And he stopped, and then I beheld at the carriage casement the sweet and rubicund face of dear old Mrs. MacAllister, whose only fault is that there is something too much of her. There was also something too much for the hack, hence the refusal of the floor to bear her any farther.

I jumped out of my bedroom, literally

jumped out of it, shaking the stairs in my headlong descent, and without a scarf, but otherwise arrayed for the tea, I ran to the assistance of my dear old friend.

She was unable to climb out of the cage in which she was imprisoned, and I had to smash the threshold of the door with my feet, an easy and a grateful task, and then I led the blushing old lady forth from her queer retreat — or perhaps I should call it her queer advance — and brought her to the house.

A glass of sherry revived her, but she elected to go upstairs to our room, which is over the parlour, thinking that by lying down she could restore her nerves to their wonted calm.

And thus began our “tea”; the first guest incapacitated from attending, owing to the inadequate transportation facilities afforded by the town.

The rest of our guests arrived in a sort of mob, some of them, I am sure, inwardly

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cursing the day that had made them leave good old New York to come to the other side of the horizon. Of course, I refer to the men, of whom there were three or four, most of them artists.

I know that they were astonished when they gained admittance to our house and viewed the wreckage — for our efforts could not restore wall-paper in an instant, and to see great segments of green paper like the division lines in a backgammon board, relieved by copious masses of dirty white, was to make one wonder whether this was an ordinary suburban effect or only a case of Eleanor's absent-mindedness. However, the beauty of social forms is that by them we are enabled to cover up our real feelings and, save by very covert glances of wonder given by careful housewives at the palpable evidences of much and disturbed dust, there was no sign vouchsafed that ours was not a very regular tea.

There was a heterogeneous collection of

musicians, artists, bookish people, and society folk, and the hum that arose was a veritable tea hum.

And yet there was no tea. Miss Haskell, looking as pretty as two peaches, was sitting at a little table containing sliced lemons and loaf sugar and cream and tea cups, but innocent of tea. Rangeley, the purple snow man, was making himself agreeable to her, and she was taking an immense interest in something that would not have interested her five minutes before, nor ever would again, that being the real test of small talk; but she was destitute of tea. I went to Eleanor, who, entirely forgetting that she had more than one guest, was talking to Mrs. Birchen in the corner about Wagner's "Quiet Life."

I interrupted her to talk about the tea, and she immediately excused herself to Mrs. Birchen and went out into the kitchen, where, as she afterward told me, she found Jane wringing her hands quite impotently. She had attempted to empty all the tea there

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was in the house into the tea kettle (she had scorned the wash-boiler) and she had spilled every grain of it into the coal scuttle instead and so that settled it — before it was made. It never occurred to either her or to my devoted but absent-minded wife to borrow some from a neighbour, and there are no stores in Brantford. (That is one of the charms of the place — to those who are used to it.)

Eleanor came to me, and without going into details whispered what had happened. I was talking at the time to a very swagger young woman who sings at St. Swithin's, and so I merely said:

“Never mind. It was very poor tea. They wouldn't have liked it. It is better so. Besides, there will be cake.”

Just then, Miss De Kaven, the animal painter, said in her orotund voice:

“Where's Leonard? I haven't seen him in an age. I suppose he's grown out of all remembrance.”

And I, looking out of the window, said :

"Here he comes. He's been on an errand."

All who heard me looked out of the window, for Leonard is a general favorite, and has often accompanied his mother to New York teas and things, so most of us saw him demolish our last hope of a collation. He slipped on a bit of ice and fell, scattering the sponge cakes far and wide, and sitting down on as many of them as his small body could cover.

I groaned.

"Oh, he isn't hurt," said the St. Swithin soprano.

"No, it was the cake I was thinking of. These are maimed ceremonies."

And then the beautiful soprano in a way forcing the words out, said :

"Did you mean to be without a cravat?"

And Eleanor had never noticed it. I started to go upstairs and get it, but just then something happened that put all thought of neckties out of my mind.

Just about this time dear old Mrs. MacAllister, thinking that she had lain long enough, resolved to get up. As I have said, my flight down the staircase had been a very jarring one, and when she set her two solid feet upon the bedroom floor and followed them up with the weight of her body, it was too much for the weak parlour ceiling, and it fell with a deafening crash and a choking smell of plaster dust.

Luckily our rooms are low-ceiled and the plaster had not far to come, but I had not anticipated any such vaudeville attraction, nor had any of my guests, and they were not prepared for it.

In a farce comedy a syphon of soda would have given pith to the next joke. We were spared that, but there was a climax just the same for poor Mrs. MacAllister, who had heard the commotion and the stifled shrieks and had seen the tremendous cloud of dust which penetrated everywhere, and whose nerves were on edge, attempted to run down-stairs and *fell* down instead.

Those who saw her say it was very funny. I did not see her, as I was trying to get the dust out of both of my eyes, and besides, a fall at her time of life — she is nearly fifty-five — is not to be laughed at by anybody. Bartley, the water colourist, helped her to her feet with all the gallantry that has made him a much courted man, and escorted her back to bed again, and I am pleased to say that the superabundance of flesh on her bones saved them and her from any lasting injury.

What followed is more or less mixed in my mind, but I do know that it was found that no one was really hurt, although several dresses were ruined. In fact, I have only recited the events of the afternoon, in order to show that what would have been very funny upon the stage and would have been certain to tickle the ears of the groundlings was not regarded by me as being in the slightest degree funny, having occurred in real life and in my own house.

The next train to town bore a crowd of dusty travellers, and I have no doubt but that they passed resolutions to the effect that living in the suburbs was always attended by the most direful results, whereas it was simply a case of absent-mindedness on the part of Mrs. Bidwell that had laid the train for all these catastrophes.

Mrs. MacAllister was too shaken up to return on the four-thirty, so she spent the night with us, to our great delight, and in course of time Mrs. Bidwell, Miss Haskell, Mrs. MacAllister, Leonard and myself sat down to a satisfying dinner.

"I think we have done all we can for our city friends," said Eleanor in her absent-minded way.

Leonard giggled.

A Suburban Christmas

WHEN the Raynors lived in the Franz Hals in New York there was no one in all the artist colony more popular than they.

Raynor will never jostle Velasquez for first place as a painter, but I doubt if Velasquez was as fine a man as Raynor, and even those who smile at the latter's figure work and screech at his landscapes, cheerfully endorse the general verdict that "Billy is all right."

And Mrs. Raynor — well, there's no use trying to describe her to an apathetic world, because if you don't know her you can't begin to imagine how nice she is.

As a general thing in a family made up of an artist and his wife, it is the artist who

does the heavy hoping, while the wife, looking at life in the light of bitter experience, wishes that her husband had a good job in the ferryhouse at so much a week, and if *he* lives in roomy air castles she is very apt to live in the small rooms for which they struggle to pay rent. I refer to the early years of successful artists and all the years of unsuccessful ones.

But Raynor and his wife are the original packages as far as hope is concerned. He is always sure that monumental success is coming to him week after week; she is just as sure that it will arrive early next week, and between the two of them they manufacture cheerfulness in large quantities and hand it out to their friends with prodigal generosity. No tea or lunch or supper of a bohemian nature ever took place in the Franz Hals without finding the Raynors among the guests.

So when they decided to leave New York and take up a residence "way out in Jersey,"

gloom fell upon their friends among the artists, and although I am not an artist, gloom fell upon me. For I have numbered Mr. and Mrs. Billy Raynor among my friends, lo! these many years.

They moved into their new house in October, and a few days afterward I received a letter from Billy, which ran as follows:

DEAR HUBERT: I always hoped that heaven would be my home eventually, but I never supposed it would be located here. Yet such is the fact. We are only two minutes from the train, and to make it better yet, I only have to go to town once a week. The real country is five minutes from us on foot, two minutes on a wheel. We have gas, electricity and a furnace, and we think we are going to get coal.

This last is quite heavenly, because our next door neighbours on either side think they are not going to get any, owing to its scarcity and a little trouble they have had with their coal dealer. Never quarrel with a coal dealer.

I can get more paintable views in a morning than I can paint in a week, and Anna says she feels better here than she ever imagined anybody could feel anywhere short of Paradise.

You ought to come out here and settle. Only forty dollars for eight rooms and a bath, a stable and half an acre of ground with roses and honeysuckle in the summer and hens if we want them—and I

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think we will. Twenty-five miles from New York, and they tell me that mosquitoes are only troublesome for a certain length of time.

If you don't hear from me again, come out to spend Christmas day with us. We will invite some of the boys from the Franz Hals, and we'll have a good time—Christmas tree and all the fixings.

Have gained five pounds since I left New York, and I'm afraid to have Anna weighed, as I have a feeling that a perfect wife should not weigh more than one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and she weighed one hundred and twenty-four before we came out.

How any one can live in the city who has had a taste of suburban life I don't see. And to think that I have spent thirty years in New York.

Come out any time and spend Sunday, but be sure to save Christmas, anyway.

Yours, way up in G,
WILLIAM RAYNOR.

A very characteristic letter, and it made me want to go out and see him, but I had an unusually busy fall, and I was unable to think of it until Christmas time.

Then I inquired among the Franz Halsers and found that although a number of them had received the same general invitation, only one was going out. The country in winter has terrors for the average city man.

But Tom Somers, whose "Winter Evening" gained him the Hallgarten prize in — I forget the date — and who paints out of doors in weather that would freeze the fingers of most men, said he was going and we planned to go together.

We had expected to go out Christmas morning, but a business matter requiring instant attention came up, and as Tom did not want to go out alone he waited for me, and it was four o'clock before we started and twilight was beginning to fall.

We bore packages of a Christmas character, and I took the precaution to carry along a bottle of whiskey, because if there's anything the matter with a furnace in a country house and you don't care to wear your overcoat indoors, a judicious use of hot water with the proper flavour is sometimes a preventor of doctor's visits.

Tom and I are not what you'd call drinking men, but we did stop in at a café on our way down Cortlandt Street to the station,

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and had a glass of Christmas cheer. Only one, but it made us both feel well disposed toward the world, and I think that the newsboy on the corner was glad that we used that particular ferry. And he didn't forget to say "Thank you" either.

"I'm sorry more of the fellows didn't come out with us," said Tom, as we lighted our cigars in a warm corner of the men's cabin. "Billy is always good company, but in his own house he will surpass himself, and his wife is a born housekeeper. The dinner will be something just a little different from any other. She has a knack that way. You know Billy's always wanted to live out of town, and I got a letter from him in November that told me he was as happy as he was the day Anna accepted him, and that Anna was happier. I've been meaning to go out, but one thing or another has prevented me."

"Same here," said I. "Yes, the boys missed it not going out. If Billy had as

much talent as he has good feeling, he'd be one of our leading painters."

"Poor Billy," said Tom, shaking his head compassionately. "He can't paint a little bit, and yet he contrives to sell something every once in a while, and I guess that Anna has a little coming to her from her mother's estate, so there's no danger of their starving. They're the salt of the earth, and they deserve more than they get."

We reached Airy Park in good season, but there was no one to meet us. A moment's reflection showed me that it was unreasonable to expect to be met, as Billy didn't even know we were coming. I had meant to write him, but I'd forgotten it, and Tom never writes a letter from one year's end to another.

There was no sleigh at the station, but the agent told us that it was the second house straight ahead.

It seemed a long two minutes from the station, but perhaps that was because the

snow was so deep and the wind so piercing. The cars had been very cold, and the good cheer we had imbibed in Cortlandt Street had not sufficed to keep us warm for more than halfway, and we did not take the roseate view of the world that had been ours when we started.

"Airy Park," said Tom, with a shiver. "I don't see the park, but it's airy all right. I feel as if my overcoat was made of mosquito netting."

"But there aren't any mosquitoes," said I. "First time I ever found them absent from their posts."

"Boy, what's the matter with the electric lights?" asked Tom of a small boy just as we passed a globe that was shrouded in gloom.

"There was an accident at the power house in Rahway this afternoon, and they're cut off."

"Oh, that's all," said Tom.

"Billy wrote me he had gas as well," said



Thomas Love Peck

"'AIRY PARK,' SAID TOM, WITH A SHIVER."—P. 254.

I, "so he's all right. Electric lights are a luxury, anyway."

We now arrived at Billy's house. At least it was the second house from the station. The snow lay deep all around it, and no track led to or from it. Billy and his wife had evidently spent the day indoors. We plowed our way to the piazza and then noticed that there was no light inside, and the frost on the parlour windows looked arctic in its construction.

"Must be pretty cold inside," said I. "I wonder if this is Billy's. Maybe it's a vacant house."

The wind wheeued and wheeued and we shivered and shivered as we walked to the door and pressed the electric bell.

"Did that ring?" asked Tom. "I didn't hear it."

"Neither did I, but probably it's in the kitchen. Try it again."

He pressed it with a lingering touch and we listened for the sound of it, but heard nothing except the howling of the storm.

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"Brrrrhh!" shivered Tom. "I'm going to have a chill in the most comfortable chair in the house as soon as Billy opens the door. This is the coldest ever. We'd make good models for a *Puck* artist."

A thermometer hung by the door, and just for curiosity I illuminated the evening's blackness with a match and learned that we were in a zero temperature.

"It's Billy's thermometer," said Tom. "He's had it ever since I knew him, so this is the house, but maybe they've gone to a neighbour's to dinner."

"That's a *beautiful* thought. What will poor Robin do then, poor thing?"

"I thought I heard voices. Probably the bell's out of order. They always are."

As he spoke he pounded with both fists on the glass of the door, and in a minute we heard steps in the house, and then a glimmer of light and then Billy's well-known voice cried out to some one at a distance.

"Some one has come. Hurrah!"

And then Billy opened the door, and as he did so the wind blew out his candle, and we were in darkness again, but in a darkness that was not as chilly as the darkness of outdoors. That is, not *quite* as chilly. There was no wind after the door was shut, but we did not feel any warmth that could be called stimulating.

"Merry Christmas, boys! I saw Tom, but I don't know who the other man was. Wait till I light the candle. Come down, Anna, we've got company. Awfully glad to see you — or I will be when I get a light."

The candle lighted, Billy — the same old happy-faced Billy, set it down on the hall table and shook hands heartily, and in a moment Anna, her face wreathed in smiles, and her voice laden with Christmas greetings, came downstairs bearing another candle.

"Why, you poor things, you must be frozen. It must be awful in New York," said Anna, as she got a good look at us. "Come into the kitchen."

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"Had the gas taken out only yesterday, and to-day the electric light has gone out for the first time since we moved in," said Billy, as cheerily as if he had announced that his uncle had left him a fortune.

"Only two candles in the house, so if you can get along with one until we can send for others ——"

"Billy, what makes it so cold?" blurted out Tom.

"The same thing that makes every house in town cold — except Dutcher's boarding house. The coal famine has struck us."

When Billy said this he used just the tone that a man uses when he points out the biggest building in town to you. Billy was evidently proud to belong to a town that boasted but one forehanded man.

We had followed the Raynors into the kitchen, which was a little warmer than the rest of the house. Still it would have been a good place to keep meat in if a man didn't have a cold cellar or a refrigerator.

"Keep your things on and we'll have a jolly time in spite of the cold. I'll put on my overcoat just to be in the fashion. Do *you* feel cold, Anna?"

"No, dearie, it takes a good deal to make me cold," said Anna, pulling her golf cape a little closer.

As for me I began to wish that I had not left my snug apartments.

"Anna," said Billy, "we ought to have a grate fire in the parlour to celebrate Christmas with, and do hurry up the dinner.

"I'm cook to-day," said Anna, with a cheery laugh. "All the cooks in town are Slavs, and they've all gone to Newark to a Christmas celebration."

This seemed a fairy story until it was explained that all the Slavs were from the same village and most of them were cousins, and they had a loving habit of taking their holidays together. So every house in Airy Park, with the exception of the boarding house where they employed coloured serv-

ants, was cookless on this glad Christmas day.

“Don’t you want some beer?” asked Billy, as we followed him to the cellar to get some wood to make a fire with.

We felt it was a little cool for beer, and so it proved, for the bottles were frozen solid and two of them had burst.

We found a broken chair in the “wine cellar,” and also a box that had contained oranges. These were borne upstairs in triumph, and in a few minutes the chair and box were giving themselves up to make it look warm. That was all it did—look warm. The flames were red and burny-looking, but they gave out no heat in that polar parlour. But I had the presence of mind to open the bottle of whiskey, and then we were in a better case.

“After dinner we’ll light the Christmas tree,” said Billy. “We half expected some one, and so we made preparations; but when no one came on the three o’clock we gave you up and went out for a long walk, and

we have just enjoyed the bracing weather outdoors."

"A little of it has leaked in, Billy," said Tom, spreading his hands to the blaze and trying to bring his shoulder blades together for warmth.

"It's too bad, old man," said I, "to have anything like this happen to you on Christmas day."

"Why, we like it," said Billy, with every evidence of sincerity. "It adds a spice of excitement to life. Now if we hadn't any chairs to burn it might be different. Awfully thoughtful of you to bring that whiskey. Hadn't a drop in the house."

Tom had given up trying to warm his hands, and he looked pretty glum. I imagine he was thinking of a snug little dinner to which he had been invited.

"How are you going to get dinner if you haven't any coal?" I asked.

"Oh, we've got a quarter of a ton, and Anna is using some of it to get dinner with.

We were going to Dutcher's if you hadn't come, but this will be a heap better ——"

"Look here," said Tom, "this open fire looks cheery and very Christmassy, but if you want to warm the house, why not burn the wood in the furnace? It'll go ten times as far. I'm really afraid of pneumonia, you know. No end jolly and unusual and all that, but the Franz Hals keeps us so infernally warm that I've sort of got into the foolish habit of expecting it, and if you haven't any wood for the furnace I'll have to go to bed to keep warm."

"No, no," said Billy, his face clouding. "Don't think of doing such a thing before dinner. I've got a lot of boxes down cellar and some planks that the men used when they were shingling the roof. We'll have a fire that will make the house seem like mid-summer. Come down and help me start it. We'll just picnic, you know. You take me as you find me and we'll have the best time ever."

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His cheery good nature was infectious. He poked his head into the kitchen on the way down and said: "Anna, we're going to build a wood fire in the furnace. Hurry up with your dinner and we'll have a jollier time than any Franz Halsers could possibly have."

He continued as we followed him down: "Isn't this a roomy little house? Finely ventilated and everything convenient. Of course this is unusual weather, and this coal famine is unusual, too, but if I had plenty of coal and the weather was warmer it wouldn't be any trouble at all to keep comfortable. We spend most of our time outdoors to save fuel, and it's doing us a world of good. I think we're going to live very economically when we really get down to it. Next month's January, you know, and February's always short, and after March you're well into spring. Oh, we haven't regretted it a minute since we came out here. Awfully glad you came to-night. People here

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are rather clannish, and I think they don't quite know what to make of an artist, so we haven't gone out much, but I have my painting, and Anna her books and housekeeping, and half the time dinner to busy herself with, and you know she likes nothing better than cooking. If she were stronger we wouldn't have a cook at all. Sometimes I say that all we really have her for is so we can pay her her wages the first of the month."

"Billy," came a voice from above, "where's the turkey. Do you suppose Dagma took it?"

"Why, I don't know, dear. Isn't it in the pantry?"

My heart sank. I was getting hungry in spite of the cold, and my exercise in helping break wood for the fire was adding to my appetite. Pray Heaven they find the turkey. Tom and I exchanged glances. These were two children with their housekeeping, and we were in a fair way to freeze

to death and then starve afterward. The wind roared outside with a noise like a heavily-laden freight train on a down grade and full steam on. No, there was no suggestion of steam in the noise. Rapid congealment, but no steam. Still, I was beginning to enjoy myself now that I knew the worst, and I think Tom was. You see, Billy was so human, and he was so manifestly happy that it would have been downright treacherous to remain gloomy.

A few quick steps on the pantry floor above us and then: "Oh, I've found it, dear. It was behind the refrigerator, and it's frozen solid. What shall I do with it?"

"Bring it down here and we'll thaw it out in the furnace," said Tom.

There was to be a turkey, after all!

We had been chopping wood, or, rather, breaking it by jumping on it, and all by the light of the furnace fire, for Billy had started it as soon as he had broken the first box, and now Anna came down, singing a little

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Christmas tune, and put the turkey in the open door, and then went upstairs to find some of the other things that were to make up our Christmas feast.

"Isn't it jolly to picnic this way?" said she, with as much ardour as Billy had displayed. "I think there are some cans of soup somewhere, and there's a plum pudding and sweet potatoes, only *they're* very much frozen."

The reader may not believe it, but we were really enjoying ourselves. Our exertions had warmed us, and Billy's imperturbable good spirits were so contagious that nothing could have made us immune.

"God rest you, merry gentlemen," sang Tom as he jumped into a box and nearly dislocated an ankle. "This is really living, Billy. I'm all aglow."

As for me, I found an old sofa by falling headlong across it, and we demolished it like three boys breaking windows in an unused house. The furnace poker was long and

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strong, and we gave thwacking blows with that and the coal shovel.

"Ram her in," shouted Tom, as the three of us bore the back of the sofa up to the furnace door.

We rammed her in and then ran off for another piece.

"What *are* you men doing down there?" called out Anna, breaking off in the middle of a song.

"Getting up an appetite!" yelled Tom, and started another Christmas song, in which we all joined. It was "Gather Around the Christmas Tree," and we joined hands and circled around the furnace, roaring it out until Anna came down to see what we were doing, and laughed at us for a parcel of boys.

"That turkey must be thawed by this time," said she.

Tom was in front of the furnace when she spoke, and he let go of our hands and yelled: "Thunder and Mars! Who pushed that turkey in?"

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The turkey had been forgotten. We had shoved it into the fiery furnace, and it was even now too far gone to help out our Christmas feast.

Tom began another song of childhood:

“Where, oh where is the Christmas turkey?
Where, oh where is the Christmas turkey?
It has gone to the fiery furnace —”

He broke off and grabbed our hands and again we circled around the furnace, while Anna sat on the cellar stairs and laughed to the verge of hysterics. The mainstay of our dinner was helping heat the house, but we didn't any of us care. We were four children once more, and we gave ourselves up to a wild abandon.

“Stop, stop!” cried Anna, “I'm weak from laughing. You ought to be scolded for burning up that lovely turkey, but we'll get along without it. Come up and help me forage.”

Now the destruction of the turkey was a

real calamity to me. It was not so much the loss of that much nutriment as the sentiment of the thing. Turkey is as much a part of Christmas as Christmas greens or a tree or presents. But I am man enough to stand even a calamity without blinking, and I joined in the foraging with gusto and tried to forget the incinerated fowl which must have weighed a good twelve pounds and looked to be uncommonly good before it was cremated.

We found half a cold ham and two cans of Kennebec salmon and three cans of soup—bouillon, vegetable and mock turtle.

Tom said: "Combine the three and it will make a rich soup."

I know nothing of the secrets of the kitchen, and the idea was distasteful to me, but Anna is a born cook, and it sounded all right to her. She even added something else to the combination, and I am bound to say that the soup was delicious. We all helped in the operations. Nine women out

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of ten hate to have any one in the kitchen when they are cooking, but Anna was delighted to have company. She warmed to her work, and at last threw off her golf cape, although I thought it imprudent. Now that my dancing was over I was none too warm, particularly when I heard that long roar of the wind outside.

The dinner, when it was served, was plain and unconventional, but it had a Christmas flavour that all the boarding-house turkeys in the world would not have had.

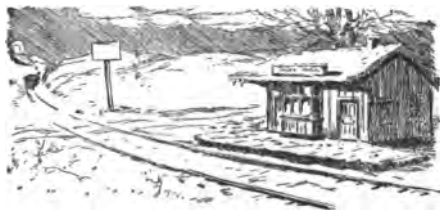
We ate it right there in the kitchen, and Tom told stories, and Billy sang songs in which the only thing lacking was a voice, and Anna bustled around and waited on us and prepared a brandy sauce for the canned pudding that took it right out of the canned goods class and made it something distinctive.

After dinner we lighted the tree, and I suppose we acted like a pack of children, but we certainly had a good time, and I never

thought of the cold weather from the time Anna announced that dinner was ready until it was time to go to bed, somewhere about two o'clock.

Billy had lots of blankets, and he told us to imagine that we were on a Peary expedition, and that was no strain on the imagination at all. I am almost certain that if it had been any other people but Billy and Anna we would have taken the earliest train back to town.

And if the inhabitants of Airy Park don't take up Billy because he is an artist, why so much the worse for the Airy Parkers, for the Raynors can give anybody that Christmas feeling right in the middle of July.





How to Write a Novel for the Masses

THE one thing necessary in a novel of romance is romance. The ordinary novel-reader is a dull bird, who knows little, and cares less, about the facts of history, the cut of a cloak, or the geography of a particular country. To him anachronisms do not exist, because he would not know one if he saw it in a cage. Of course I don't mean you, dear reader; but you must admit that the vast majority of the reading public is made up of dull, unthinking people, so why should writers spend so much time substantiating facts, studying costumes and scenery and other details that do not affect the real interest of the story, which is and must be the romantic portion of it?

Let me show you how it ought to be done:

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“It was dawn of a clear spring morning. Guy le Cormorant set forth from his father’s castle with never a sou in his pocket, a large credit at his banker’s, and the whole world before him.”

Here chuck in some reference to the “‘Provençal robins’ that during the reign of the good Louis sang with such surpassing sweetness.” If you wish to, run in a few Breton peasants, and dot the meadow with sheep, and fill the fields with Lyonnaise potatoes. The public won’t know or care whether you are right or not.

Now it’s time for your first adventure, for you are nearing the end of the second page, and a successful romantic novel should yield an adventure to every ten pages, and stop at the 300th page.

“Around the corner of the Louvre” (never mind what or where the Louvre is; the public will think it is a river or a field) “came the wicked seneschal, Vignon de Morimont. His fat horse jogged along

lazily, and from the corners of his treacherous eyes he looked at the brave young Guy."

Now have Guy accuse him of having murdered his (Guy's) grandmother in 1560.

"When my father told me that my grandam" ("grandam" has a good sound always, like a great oath) "had been murdered by de Morimont of Morimont Castle, I swore that the murder should not go unavenged. All this morning have I sought thee; now have I found thee. Prepare for an awful doom."

Now let them draw their broadswords, and then say something about Richelieu having issued an edict against the carrying of broadswords by gentlemen. Start in as if you were going to be very dry over it, but cut it short quickly. That will make the reader like you. Then have Guy fly at the wicked seneschal, and spit him on the broadsword, and toss him into a plane tree. A plane tree is better than the most ornate tree that your reader is likely to know about.

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If a man thinks that you know something that he doesn't know, he suspects you of knowing other things of which he is ignorant, and his respect increases.

Having tossed the seneschal into the plane tree, let Guy mount his horse and continue on his way. Adventure number one is over, and he has won out easily; but it will be a mistake to let him win every round with as little effort. In a story, a dead-sure thing is not exciting:

It is now time to bring in more singing of birds, as a sort of contrast. If a shepherd is handy, let him pipe up a little, so as to put Guy into good spirits, as the stabbing of the seneschal is on his nerves a bit. Guy might toss the shepherd a sequin or a groat. The public has heard of both coins, but doesn't know where they grow.

Refer briefly to the clouds, and carry him on horseback past the place "where in 1493, the year after Columbus discovered America, two monks of St. Bernard were mur-

dered by Villon, the poet scamp. A shrine still marks the spot,—a shrine erected by Villon's daughter." That will make the public say, "My, don't he know a lot!"

Now it is high time to bring Blanche de Boisgobey upon the scene. You may have her poor, but of good family, or you may make her a rich runaway, fleeing from the unpleasant attentions of Prince de Joinville; but have her family good, by all means, and she herself must be absolutely unspotted. The great public will not stand for a tarnished woman in the rôle of heroine of one of these romantic novels.

Describe her clothes, but in this you'll have to be careful; for while the men won't know anything about it, the women will catch on if you make any flagrant error. I guess you'll have to take the trouble to read up the clothes, unless you have a sister who is up on garments. You might dress Blanche in the fashion of to-day, and say that she was fond of being ahead of her time.

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But if you drop a hint of another adventure, not far off, you can draw it mild on the clothes business. Make her just as pretty as you know how, and that without describing her features; because no two persons agree on a woman's beauty, particularly no man and woman. Just say that she was as beautiful as "that fair queen of Greece whose husband swam the Hellespont to rescue her from the clutches of King Xerxes." There's more ancient history, and the dear public is left to its own imagination to conjure up proper features for her.

Now bring on your second adventure. People have a dim idea that wolves once overran France. You can speak of the great she-wolf that in 1343 ate up an entire village in the department of the Loire or the Soir; never mind how you spell it,—the public won't know the difference. Have that she-wolf, grown old and hungry, come out of a copse (by all means, a copse) and spring upon poor Blanche, who is on her way to a nunnery.

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“While the terrible wolf was yet in mid-air, Guy pushed his horse to a mad gallop, and, raising his arms above his head, he caught the famished beast in his Herculean grasp, diverting her for a moment from her purpose.”

Now you can give 'em a pretty good fight. Have the wolf and Guy and the horse go down together in a grand mixup. Let Blanche pinch the wolf's tail, and have that so anger the “vulpine beast” that she tears a hole in Guy's doublet. It is a little early in the game to spoil his face, but if you give the reader a hint that it will heal up before they are married, I think you are safe to scratch him pretty hard. Of course, as soon as Blanche sees the scratches she will fall in love with him, and then faint.

Make the combat long, and have Guy pretty nearly done for, when, by an opportune stab, he punctures the heart of the monster.

He can come in for the big bounty that is

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on the wolf, if you want; but as he is rich already, that won't amount to much, except as it gives him a chance to bestow it on a group of poor villagers who have been attracted to the scene of the fight. Be sure to call it "largess" if he scatters it among them.

Now you see why you have provided a stout horse. It is so that Blanche may sit behind Guy, and continue on her way to the nunnery, he having gallantly offered to set her down at her corner.

Now it is time for the real villain to appear. The seneschal Guy treed on the second page was only for early seasoning. The real villain is, of course, Prince Henri Milledetonnefleurs de Joinville, and you would do well to place him on a stallion, and have him ride for two days and two nights in pursuit of Blanche.

It's really necessary to bring in a little more scenery. A novel would seem bare without it. You might set out a double

row of Lombardy poplars that were planted in honor of the victory of Magna Charta over Count de Blois in 1010. Never mind the public; they won't know. It'll look all right in type. Mention a dense flock of Marseillaise blackbirds that obscured the light of the sun, and let it be as a portent against the success of the wicked Henri. Mention other flights, casually, and speak of the Children's Crusade in search of the Northwest Passage, that was near to having been discontinued owing to a flight of sea gulls from John o' Groat's to Land's End. This last will establish you as a master of curious knowledge.

Let Guy go to sleep, weak from loss of blood, and while the horse crops at the grass, and Blanche plucks ox-heart daisies, bring on the villain at an easy gallop, and have him pick up Blanche and ride off with her. Keep Guy asleep for a half hour, so that he will deserve the more credit when he, on his fat old horse, chases and overtakes the fleet

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stallion. For of course he overtakes the villain. The stallion has peculiarly shaped hoofs, having lost a portion of each one in the battle of Cressy or Sedan,—either one will do,—and Guy is able to track Henri in this way. Otherwise, the hero not being a woodsman, Henri would have escaped with his prey, and it would have caused a bad break in the story.

Let Guy come on Henri in a narrow defile, — a characteristically French one. If you don't happen to know any French defile, describe an American one, and it will go all right.

Of course this won't be the final fight, because you've got to fill at least three hundred pages, and Guy will have adventures with the pickpockets of Paris, and in the Bay of Biscay and the Swiss Alps; but I can't write the whole book for you, so we'll suppose it is the final fight.

Let Henri have the advantage at the start, but give Guy great staying powers. Make

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him fatigué Henri, and make Henri say, "Je suis fatigué." That's real French, and you can find a lot more like it where that came from. Make Henri in need of rest and refreshment, and then let Guy come some celebrated thrust on him. You can name the thrust, if you wish; invent it and describe it in detail out of your own head. No one will ever show you up; and if any one does, it will advertise the book.

Make Guy smile at Blanche, who by this time is loving him tremendously, and then, "with a sudden turn of the wrist,—that wrist that ten years later was to save the life of the great Mirabeau,—Guy gave Henri the congé, and the wicked prince turned and reeled in his tracks."

Now make Guy say, "Honi soit qui mal y pense," or "Dum vivimus, vivamus;" and then, to conclude the book, make the old seneschal of page 2 crawl up, filled with remorse. He had dropped out of the plane tree, and the fall had brought him to. Make

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him ask forgiveness of Guy; and then, "while little French birds were singing ronds, and as peasants bent over their hoes in clod-like attitudes, or leaned upon their spades to listen to the Angelus, the monk pronounced the words that made Blanche and Guy husband and wife,—or rather, wife and husband."

There you are. It's a seller.